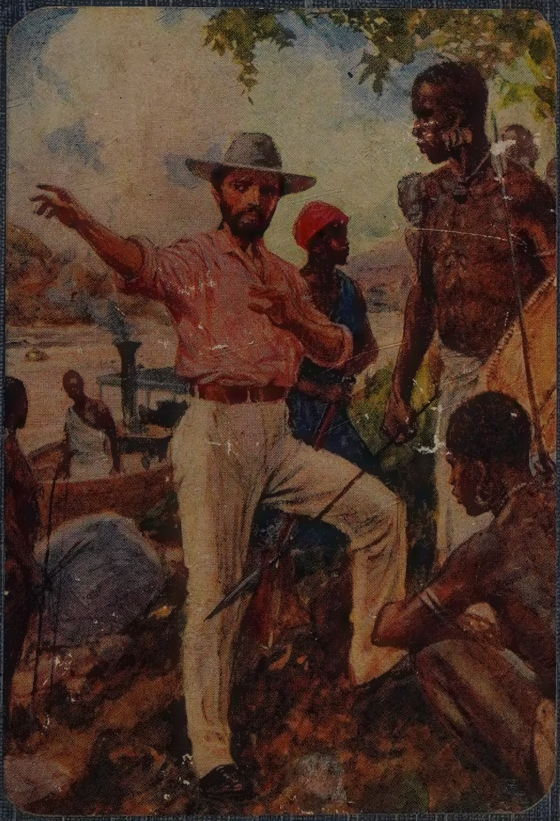
MACKAY of the GREAT LAKE

C. F. PADWICK



ST. LUKE'S PRESBYTERIAN
SUNDAY SCHOOL.

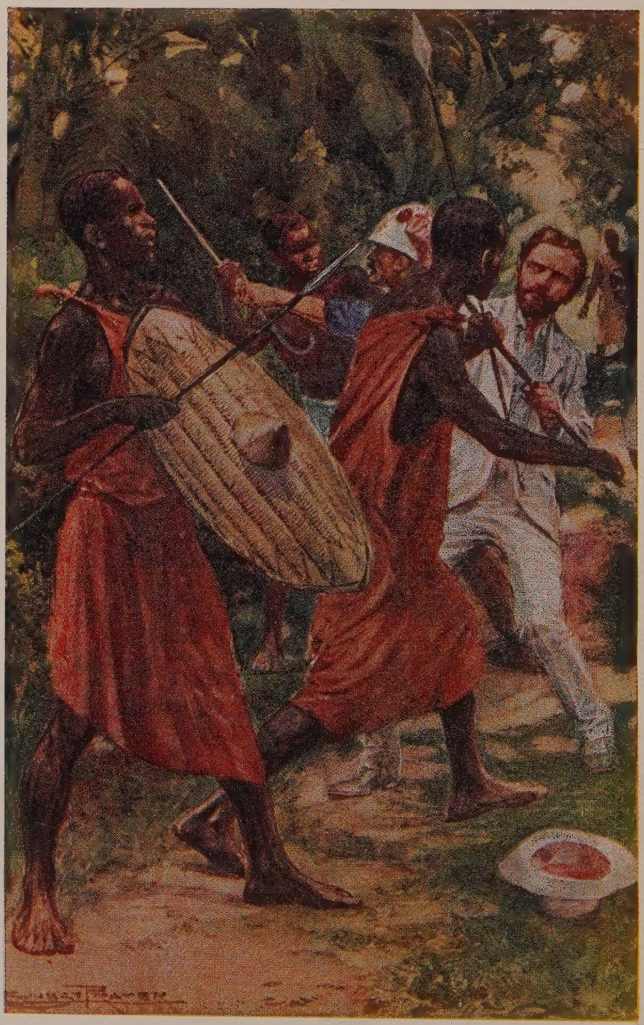
NO
21.

MACKAY OF THE GREAT LAKE

ISSUED IN CO-OPERATION WITH
THE CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY
SALISBURY SQUARE, LONDON, E.C.

1st edition, 1917
2nd „ 1918

PRINTED AT OXFORD, ENGLAND
BY FREDERICK HALL
PRINTER TO THE UNIVERSITY



"The soldiers snatched away the white men's sticks."

MACKAY
OF THE GREAT LAKE

BY

C. E. PADWICK

FOREWORD BY GENERAL SIR WM. ROBERTSON,
K.C.B., K.C.V.O., D.S.O.
General Officer Commanding Forces in Great Britain

ILLUSTRATIONS BY ERNEST PRATER

SECOND EDITION

HUMPHREY MILFORD
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
LONDON NEW YORK TORONTO MELBOURNE
BOMBAY
1918

TO THE BOYS

OF

RHYNIE PUBLIC SCHOOL, ABERDEENSHIRE

'One thing above everything;
I must make my Christianity
a practical thing.'

ALEXANDER MACKAY, 14 April, 1874

FOREWORD

I HOPE that this story of a brave Christian pioneer will be widely read by those for whom it is intended—the boys of the British Empire.

Alec Mackay, a man 'with a purpose', felt himself called upon to answer a message from Darkest Africa, and fought his way through countless difficulties and dangers in his efforts to carry Christianity and civilization to the savage tribes of the Great Lake. The example he set of single-minded devotion to his self-appointed duty is one that all will do well to study and follow.

It is with special pleasure that I write this brief foreword at a time when we are celebrating a great victory, for our victory

is due, under divine Providence, to the display by our sailors, soldiers, and airmen of the same qualities of courage, unselfishness, and tenacity of purpose as those which stand out so prominently in the life of Alec Mackay.

W. R. ROBERTSON,
GENERAL

22 *November*, 1918

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NOTE

Two biographies of the great and well-known missionary, Alexander Mackay, both by his sister, have been published by Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton, one for adults, and the other for boys. It is felt, however, that there is room for another and shorter biography, written in a style calculated to appeal to boys of the scout class. This book accordingly has been independently prepared. The early part is in the main the fruit of a visit to Rhynie and conversations with people who remember the Mackay family and have kept in touch with them. No writer, however, who has read the two delightful biographies already published could pretend to be uninfluenced by them, and the incident of the nurse which opens the present volume was derived from *The Story of Mackay*.

THE EXPLORER'S MESSAGE

SIXTEEN drums of lizard-skin and goat-skin gave out their thunder, and countless flutes of reed set up their wailing as Stanley, the great explorer, was ushered into the palace of King Mtesa of Uganda.

The explorer's caravan had reached the shores of the mighty lake, named after Queen Victoria, the Victoria Nyanza. On the lovely north-west coast of that great inland sea, whose shores were almost unexplored by white men, Stanley was now to meet the greatest monarch of Central Africa.

Far back along his line of march Stanley had heard men speak of the might of Mtesa, king of all Uganda. Here was no petty chief to be won over by a yard of calico and a handful of beads; the explorer saw with wonder a stately prince in sweeping Arab robes, his throne surrounded by great earls who ruled the ten provinces of his kingdom. On either side of Mtesa's chair stood officers of state. There was the Katikiro or prime minister, a small man but a shrewd one, and great in the counsels of his master. Kauta stood there, the chief of all the royal cooks, and Sabakaki, keeper of the palace gates, Mujasi, commander of

the body-guard, and Gabunga, admiral of the king's canoes and lord of the isles of fishermen, the jewelled Sese islands of the lake. These and many another stood on either hand.

Stanley looked in admiration at the king with his stately form all but six feet in height, his large dark eyes, his flashing white teeth, and small delicate hands. Mtesa gazed at Stanley, the fourth white traveller to visit his kingdom of Uganda by the inland sea; and while he looked the king's thirsty vanity longed for the white man's praise. Mtesa the tyrant lived, as tyrants may, amid slavish flattery, but to win the wonder and the praise of the white man would be a new delight for his cloyed soul.

So the royal commands went out, and all Uganda set itself to entertain Stanley. Eighty long canoes manœuvred on the lake, skimming over the water like wildfowl; three hundred wives of Mtesa watched them from the shore; the troops of Uganda showed their skill at target practice, and the king himself led their shooting. The cruelties of Mtesa, the sudden executions at his merest whim, his slave raids among helpless villages, were for the time forgotten, and all was holiday.

But not in vain had Stanley lived four months and four days at the side of David Livingstone. He was not now a man who could gaze at the handsome, vain king and his clever people only with the

stare of the sight-seer. Stanley longed to bring help to that fair kingdom by the great lake. He held long conversations with Mtesa, and set him begging for a white teacher. What is more, Stanley himself taught Mtesa, until the king, charmed with his new learning, sent for boards planed smooth on which his lessons might be written in Arabic letters.

The Ten Commandments, 'Our Father,' and those words of Christ, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,' were for the first time written and read in the tyrant's palace.

Then Stanley sat down in his reed hut near the lake to write a letter to a British newspaper, the *Daily Telegraph*. A glowing description he gave of his visit to Uganda and the power and state of Mtesa. And while he wrote he thought of the many Christian men who would read that newspaper, and the explorer challenged them to send the king a teacher, a missionary 'who can teach people how to become Christians, cure their diseases . . . and turn his hand to anything like a sailor.' Mtesa 'has begged me to tell the white men that if they will only come to him he will give them all they want,' he wrote.

> 'Here, gentlemen, is your opportunity—embrace it! The people on the shores of the Nyanza call upon you.'

The dispatch was finished, sealed up, and addressed to the office of the *Daily Telegraph* in London; but

many a mile over Africa must it be carried before it could reach England.

Over the hills of Uganda where the yellow sunflowers blazed, past the thatched villages set among their green banana gardens, across the deep gullies where the path went on a sandy causeway raised above the swamps of feathery papyrus reeds, the letter was to travel to the thunder and foam of the mighty Ripon Falls.

Here the great lake tumbled its waters into the ancient river Nile, and Stanley's letter would begin its journey by canoe down that great stream that bore it ever northwards, through thick beds of sudd where hippos kept watch with their small, blear eyes, and on past the land of many a dark-skinned tribe, until at last the sand and dust of Khartoum would be won, where in a tumble-down palace General Gordon ruled the great Sudan.

Stanley gave his letter into the charge of Linant de Bellefonds, a young Belgian officer, who was working his way northwards from Uganda to Gordon's head-quarters at Khartoum. De Bellefonds' caravan wound away over the red earth of the Uganda road on the first stage of its tremendous journey, and Stanley turned again to his explorations.

. . . . . .

On the banks of the Nile the tall lean Bari people were fretting in helpless wrath. These mighty

hunters who could stand for hours on one leg like a stork, were prizes of value in the slave-market by reason of their strength of sinew. Slave-raiding Arabs had swooped down upon them from the north, and for all their strength the Bari could not stand against the fire-arms of the raiders. They longed for revenge.

When a scout from his post on some tall ant-hill brought news of a party of foreigners passing down the river, the Bari tribesmen seized their long spears and rushed upon de Bellefonds.

A sharp scuffle, and de Bellefonds' men took to flight, the shaggy heads of the Bari warriors disappeared behind the bushes, and very still and lonely on the bank of the great river lay the body of the Belgian officer.

. . . . . .

A party of Gordon's men stood on the bank of the Nile, their faces set with horror. There, staring up at the wide sky, they had found the body of their comrade Linant de Bellefonds, his red shirt pierced with many a spear-wound.

'Perhaps he was bringing papers with his reports for Gordon,' they said, and reverently they moved the mute body to search for any dispatches of importance. Thrust for safety into one of the dead man's long knee-boots was a sealed packet, addressed to the office of the *Daily Telegraph* in London.

Stanley's dispatch had been guarded to the last. They carried it to Gordon.

. . . . . .

General Gordon's messengers took the sealed letter down the broad stream of the Nile to Egypt, where they posted it for England, and it came to pass that one November day in 1875 London newsboys were selling to men in great-coats and silk hats a message from Stanley, the American explorer, carried by a Belgian officer and sent on its way by a great British soldier.

This book tells the story of a dauntless man who answered the challenge Stanley wrote on the shores of the great lake.

CHAPTER I

A BOY WITH 'THE WIND IN HIS TEETH'

'He'll hae the win' in his teeth a' his life.'

Old Annie was speaking, the grand old Scotswoman who was servant to Mr. Mackay, the minister of the Free Kirk at Rhynie. According to the calendar in the minister's study the date was only October 13, but in this year of 1849 a cruel snowstorm had already brought the long winter to the Aberdeenshire hills, and the snow-laden wind was whistling through every crack. Old Annie was telling Mr. Mackay that with the winter storm a small son had come into the household at the manse. A stormy career would be his, she prophesied.

'Sic a day to come, sir! He'll hae the win' in his teeth a' his life.'

Indeed, a boy who grew up, as Alec Mackay did, in Rhynie village among the northern hills, must be ready to battle with great winds. They hurled themselves down from the hills and across the village green where the boys played their football. Alec's delicate mother shivered over her mending and threw another peat on the fire, but the blue-eyed Alec was off, on holiday afternoons, far across the bleak hillsides where the boys were free to wander,

climbing the low stone walls and tramping with his longest strides across the heather.

In early spring came the great days of the heather-burning, when whole hillsides were set ablaze to make space for the springing of tender shoots, food for the mountain sheep and grouse. Alec would go, stick in hand, to the place where the men of the village were drawn up, each with a stout staff, to stop the rush of the flames that ran before the wind. Those were exciting moments when man and fire met and the faces of the beaters grew crimson and scorched in the heat, while the smoke filled Alec's eyes with smarting tears.

Later, when summer holidays came and all the bees of Rhynie were busy making heather honey, Alec and his sister Jessie, with the twin girls and their younger brother Charles, would be off and away for long days on the side of old Tap o' Noth, the mountain that stands up like a friendly giant guarding Rhynie village. When they came in at night Mrs. Mackay would smile at the inky faces, stained blue-black from the whortleberries (or blaeberries as Alec called them), and send her boy off to scrub himself before supper and family worship at the manse.

Alec's grandest holidays were those when he and old Annie went together to spend a few days on a Highland farm six miles away from Rhynie. When Annie had said the magic words, ' We'll gang

to Blackhills,' the couple would start off joyously for their trudge up the glen, a gaunt old Scotswoman with long steady strides, and a kilted boy, wiry and tough as the heather stems.

As the road wound deeper among the hills where grouse laughed and the golden plover whistled, Alec laughed and whistled too, for he was climbing up to Blackhills, a place where even a boy could find man's work waiting to his hand.

A bleak little farm it was, on a high peat moss where the road was marked out with stout 8-foot poles for fear it should be lost in snow, and the garden snowdrops bloomed as late as May. Here Alec could go out and drive the cattle home to the byre, or carry straw for them from the

tiny ricks weighted down with ropes and heavy stones lest the great winds should lift them bodily away.

In June the sodden black peats were cut out of the moss and laid to dry for winter fires, and the boys would carry drinks to the men who spent the summer day loading and pushing barrows on the heavy soil of the bog. Alec often worked as helper to the man who built the loose stone dykes that kept the cattle from straying over the hills. Lifting granite blocks was heavy work, and it was good to come in hungry to farm-house tea of oatcake, heather honey, and boiled eggs.

Afterwards, Alec would sit on a low stool near the wide chimney, watching the blue smoke curl up from the peat fire while he listened to farm-house tales, as a man after a long day's march will sit by his camp fire and hear the tales of travel. Brave stories they told in that Scottish farm-house, of Covenanters in the olden days who, forbidden to worship God as they judged right, would tramp for miles to a secret spot in glen or forest to hold their services, and of the clatter of the troopers' horses as they galloped up to break into the service, and, bearing off the leaders, to clap them into prison and punish them with banishment or death.

But those were holidays. On working days in Rhynie, Alec's lessons must be ready, the instant breakfast was over, to hand in to his tall, clever father. The minister taught his boy himself, and

THE FORGE IN THE VILLAGE OF RHYNIE

the neighbours would sometimes say he kept his son too closely at his books. But Alec was proud of his father, the friend of learned men and leaders in science.

Mr. Mackay could tell Alec many a secret of the soil and rock around them, and sometimes the two would set out with hammers to the quarry and Alec would learn how to chip out of the old red sandstone the flinty 'cherts' in which were buried the black remains of reeds that grew tall and green thousands of years before Scotland had a name. Then, while Mr. Mackay was still busy in research, the boy might coax the stonemasons to let him try their heavier tools and help in shaping a water-trough, doorstep, or coping-stone for some hillside farm.

Though living in a small and lonely village, Mr. Mackay watched the great movements of the outside world, and talked about them with Alec. Father and son waited with breathless interest for fresh stories of the exploration of Africa. The minister's study was full of maps and reports, atlases and books of travel. As news came home of journeys of Livingstone, Speke, or Grant, Alec and his father would trace their travels on the maps of Africa and mark their new discoveries. On winter days Alec would spend hours in drawing clear, accurate maps and dreaming of exploring journeys. He 'bagged' an old wall map of Africa and hung it

in his own attic, where he traced on its blank spaces the newly-found snow mountains near the equator, and the great inland sea, the Victoria Nyanza.

Lessons over, Alec would rush out, and calling to Charles, would race up the road to the five acres of croft where the manse pony was tethered by a long chain. Mr. Mackay, seeing Alec's love of real work, gave him full charge of the pony as soon as he was twelve years old, and the little black Shetland was devoted to the boy, for he had a way with him that always made animals and children his fast friends. Many a time the village folk laughed at the pony's home-coming ; the jolly little beast, eager to reach its stable, would race down the road full gallop, Alec and Charles riding together bareback, and the long tethering chain clattering on the road behind.

When the pony was groomed and bedded up, Alec was free to visit some of his many village friends. There was the carpenter's shop where William Souter often let him saw and plane a board, or that other shop where old Lobban, the smith, shod all the horses for many a mile around, and Alec might sometimes get leave to handle the powerful bellows. Down by Bogie Water was a wheel turned by the stream, and this wheel turned a host of other wheels in the old mill where the farmers' wool was carded. Alec felt his love of tools and machines grow strong within him. He liked to be their master, to know the right trick of a tool and to understand the ways of a machine.

Often he would slip off down the four-mile road to Gartly station, stand there when the train came in from Aberdeen or Huntly, and watch the doings of the men who had control of the green-painted engine, the property of the Great North of Scotland Railway Company.

One day, as Alec was driving with his father down to the station, Mr. Mackay, who was on his way to Edinburgh, said suddenly: 'Well, what book shall I bring home for you?' Then Alec spoke out the wish of his heart and told his father how he longed to have a small printing-press that he could work himself. Mr. Mackay could hardly hide his disappointment; the clever man longed that his boy should take to books; and as Alec drove the pony home from the station he could not tell if his dream would really come true, and his father would let him have a machine of his own to handle and control.

It did come true. A little press arrived and was

set up in Alec's own attic where his map of Africa hung, and the carrier brought a large and heavy parcel of printers' types from the great publishing firm of Messrs. Blackwood. Alec was master of a machine.

On Sunday evenings, when his father had gone far over the hills to preach, and the babies were in bed, Alec often had his mother to himself. Then she would tell him of her ancestors who centuries ago had been driven from the fair land of France for their religious faith. And other tales she told her boy of brave French folk who for their faith were chained to the rowers' seats as galley-slaves, or cut down with the sword. Or she would sometimes speak of men of Christ who had set out to carry His message over Canadian snows or African forest paths.

'Would you like *me* to go as a missionary to Africa, Mother?' said Alec one Sunday night.

'If God prepares you for it, my boy, but not unless'; and Mrs. Mackay wondered in her heart what God had in store for this boy of hers, so ready with a joke, so quick of brain and skilful of hand, so hardy to meet the mountain winds.

His mother prayed that Alec might be a good warrior in God's battles.

A. M. Mackay
C.M.S. Uganda

CHAPTER II

A MAN WITH A PURPOSE

When Alec was fourteen he said good-bye to his attic at the manse and set out from Rhynie to the grammar school at Aberdeen, a city of grey granite by the northern sea.

He did well with his Latin and mathematics, but always looked forward to Saturday afternoons when he would slip off to one of the large ship-building yards. In the machine sheds amid clang and din Alec watched steam hammers so strong that they could smash an iron bar, so delicate that they could crack a hazel nut and leave the kernel whole. Outside he saw the ships grow under the skilled hands of the workmen : here a sturdy trawler for the fisheries, there an iron cargo steamer to fetch wood or tar from Norway, in the next yard the nobler lines of a tall wooden frigate for the Baltic trade. On those Saturday afternoons Alec studied the build of a ship as a scholar will study a Latin verse, or a mother her baby's face.

One April day, when he had been at school six months, Alec went to the station to meet the Gartly train, bringing his mother on a visit to the city. He was as tall as she was, now, and she was proud

of her eldest boy who could pilot her through the city streets, and take her home to some lodgings where they spent ten glorious days together.

Ever afterwards Alec was glad to have had those days with his mother, for only two months later a sudden message called him home, and he arrived to find that she had died in the night. Alec, at school in Aberdeen, had been the only child away from home, and his mother had thought of her boy and left him as a present one of the treasures of her life—a Bible with many a mark in her own handwriting.

Alec said not a word to any one to show how he valued that last gift, but for her sake he read it steadily, and later on he learned to read it for the strength it brought him.

He was no longer a child, and his mother was the only person to whom he could have talked about his real thoughts at this time. But he knew that now he must begin to live the life of a man, and quietly and for himself he took the greatest step a boy can take, and asked the Lord Christ to be Saviour and Master of his new manhood.

Mackay's love for machines and power of understanding them was growing as he grew, and he longed for the life of an engineer. At first it seemed impossible, but after some years of school and college his father gave him leave to try to work out his plan by earning the money to pay for lectures and training in the engineering shops. The family had now left

their Rhynie home and were living in Edinburgh, and each afternoon Alexander Mackay would jump on to a tram for Leith, where the dockyards lie, and there in blue and oily overalls he spent happy hours making models of oil engines, turning pieces at the lathe, fitting parts together, and testing finished machines.

Sunday afternoon and evening saw Mackay trudging off to some of the narrow courts of old Edinburgh, where a crowd of bare-footed, cheeky little urchins were on the look-out for their friend, the young engineer, who came so regularly to teach them in a Sunday school for boys and girls too ragged to show their faces among smart, well-dressed children.

On those Edinburgh Sundays Mackay met the great friend of his life, John Smith. They were much the same age, both had been boys in bleak northern villages, and both were studying now in Edinburgh—one to be an engineer, the other a doctor. John Smith was a strong, purposeful man, who, like Mackay, had taken service under Christ. They became fast friends, and many a laugh they had together over the tricks of their street urchins, and many a long talk over the work that they hoped to do in the world.

Just after his twenty-fourth birthday Mackay went down to the docks at Leith and sailed on the s.s. *North Star* for Germany, there to learn all that

German engineers could teach him. He became a designer in some great works near Berlin, and spent his time inventing new types of locomotives and portable engines. The seven designers, whose plans kept two thousand men at work in the great shops, sat at small tables in a room together. Mackay gloried in his work ; the plans for some new powerful engine would fill his whole thoughts until he had perfected every detail of her fittings.

So able was the young Scottish designer that he became the head of the whole locomotive department, with hundreds of men under his orders, and later he was offered a partnership that would have made the Rhynie boy a rich man.

Greatly to the surprise of the heads of the firm, Mackay refused the offer. They thought the young Scotsman a mad fool, but John Smith, now hard at work doctoring the poorest folk in Edinburgh, understood his friend's purpose. Mackay had bigger dreams than money-making ; at night, when he was home from the workshops, alone in his lodgings, he would sometimes write his thoughts in a diary. These are some of the words he wrote :—

> ' This day last year Livingstone died—a Scotsman and a Christian, loving God and his neighbour, in the heart of Africa. " Go thou and do likewise." '

One night in December, 1875, the world outside his lodgings lying silent under Christmas snow,

Mackay sat up far into the night reading a book from home. 'How I found Livingstone,' by H. M. Stanley, was the book whose pages he was turning so fast and eagerly. He was enthralled by the story of Stanley's search for Dr. Livingstone; of the meeting at Ujiji on the track of the slave gangs; of the days which the young explorer spent in wonder at the side of that great warrior of God; and of the parting, when the silence of Africa closed once more round David Livingstone as he went forward like Moses to die alone with God, leaving other men to enter lands to which he had shown the way.

It was past midnight when Mackay laid down the book, and his eye caught three words on a newspaper lying beside it on the table. 'Church Missionary Society,' he read, and, his mind still full of that master missionary David Livingstone, he picked up the paper.

It held him spellbound.

You, who have read the beginning of this book, know the story that Mackay was reading in his German lodgings. It was a letter from the Church Missionary Society telling of Stanley's challenge to the Christians of Britain. On the shores of the great lake Victoria, King Mtesa and his nation were waiting for a teacher, a Christian who could 'turn his hand to anything like a sailor.' The Church Missionary Society offered to pay for a mission by

that inland sea, some thousand miles away from the British gunboats on the African coast. They called for volunteers.

There and then Mackay voluntcered.

It was past midnight, but he could not rest till he had written to the Church Missionary Society in London :—

> 'My heart burns for the deliverance of Africa, and if you can send me to any one of those regions which Livingstone and Stanley have found to be groaning under the curse of the slave-hunter I shall be very glad.'

His offer was accepted.

He finished the engine he was building in the works, and came over to England for a few busy months spent in collecting the goods to be taken up to the lake. It was well that Mackay was a fine judge of tools, for Stanley had written :—

> 'For the mission's use it should bring with it a supply of hammers, saws, augers, chisels, axes, hatchets, adzes, carpenters' and blacksmiths' tools . . . trowels, a couple of good-sized anvils, a forge and bellows, an assortment of nails and tacks, a plough, spades, shovels, pickaxes. . . . Most desirable would be an assortment of garden seed and grain; also white lead, linseed oil, brushes, a few volumes of illustrated journals, gaudy prints, a magic lantern, rockets, and a photographic apparatus.'

Mackay was able to talk over this list with Colonel Grant, the famous explorer, of whom he had often read in the manse at Rhynie. The Colonel advised

his taking some cricket sets and garden tools. 'Don't have your things packed in boxes,' he said. 'Soak some canvas sacks in a solution to keep out wet, and pack your goods in those. Boxes with sharp corners are galling to the bare skin of the African porters who carry them day after day.'

Mackay went home to Edinburgh to say good-bye to his father and sisters, and he had the little printing press that had stood in his attic at Rhynie packed up to travel thousands of miles and print the first words in the new language he would learn in Uganda.

But in all this busy packing, what most fascinated Mackay was to go down to Messenger's yard at Teddington by the Thames, and see the building of the *Daisy*, a little steam launch that was to be the first missionary ship on the great lake.

Slender and very light of draught she was, for her thirty-two feet of length : a boat that drew much water could never explore shallow creeks and unknown rivers. Mackay had her hull of cedar wood built in sections light enough to be slung on poles and carried by Africans to the shore of the lake. There she would be fitted together, and he himself would build the boiler and engine whose parts he had designed on purpose for African travel.

The packing was all but finished when Mackay went one day to the head-quarters of the Church Missionary Society to talk over plans for the adven-

ture. They told him that seven young volunteers had come forward, but not one of the party was a doctor. At once Mackay's thoughts flew to his doctor friend in Edinburgh, and he wrote to John Smith proposing that he should come with the party as a doctor missionary.

There had been no time to hear from Dr. Smith when Mackay paid his last visit to his head-quarters in the Church Missionary House close by the great dome of St. Paul's Cathedral. Three of the party had already sailed, Mackay was off in two days, and that April morning he and the others were to have their final instructions from head-quarters. Mackay went upstairs and into the committee room. There, among the other members of the Uganda party, sat John himself, quiet and calm as usual, with a glorious smile for his friend. Dr. Smith had hurried down from Edinburgh and had been accepted as one of the Uganda party just half an hour before.

One by one that morning the volunteers for Uganda said good-bye to the Committee that was sending them into the heart of Africa. Mackay was the youngest and the last to speak. He stood up, a slight, well-knit man with blue eyes that looked fearlessly ahead.

'I want to remind the Committee,' he began, 'that within six months they will probably hear that one of us is dead.'

Only the heavy rumble of London traffic broke the stillness in the room as Mackay went on :—

'Is it at all likely that eight Englishmen should start for Central Africa and all be alive six months after? One of us at least—it may be I—will surely fall before that. But what I want to say is this: when that news comes, do not be cast down, but send some one else immediately to fill the vacant place.'

On 27 April, 1876, Mackay, with O'Neill, a young Irish member of the Uganda party, embarked on the liner *Peshawur*, and passing down Southampton Water steamed out beyond the Needles lighthouse to the open sea.

CHAPTER III

THE LONG, LOW COASTLINE

'GET up, Mackay, I want to show you something.'

Mackay rolled out of his berth and was soon standing by O'Neill on the deck of the *Peshawur* as she ploughed steadily eastward through the Mediterranean. It was half-past five on a May morning, too early for most of the passengers to be abroad. Mackay and his friend stood almost alone in a blue and white world of sea and sky, foam path and seagull's wing. They strained their eyes to the starboard where a low line of violet grey stained the horizon. Nothing more than that, yet it held their eyes and their thoughts, for it was Africa.

Day after day passed as the liner held on her course to Aden, and Mackay was busy with many things, testing the ship's thermometers, grinding at medical books, making friends with the officers, and taking observations for latitude and longitude. But always on the starboard lay that long unbroken coastline.

'And they talk at home of Africa being opened up by the journeys of a few explorers,' thought Mackay; 'why, you might as well say a pumpkin has been opened up when you have run a needle through it.'

At Aden a man who looked every inch a sailor was waiting for the *Peshawur* as she steamed in, and Mackay had his first sight of the leader of the Uganda party, Lieutenant Shergold Smith, who had himself sailed a little mission ship, the *Highland Lassie*, from Falmouth Harbour to Aden.

Under a better leader Mackay could not have wished to serve. Lieutenant Shergold Smith, who passed into the navy at the head of all the cadets of his year, had seen service in Mediterranean, Atlantic, and West African waters. In the steamy heat of the Lagos coast he had leapt into water swarming with sharks, to rescue a seaman of H.M.S. *Duncan*, on which he was then serving.

Soon afterwards the Ashanti king led 40,000 men against the British, and Shergold Smith was sent inland, under that great soldier Sir Garnet Wolseley, to rescue the British and French subjects held prisoner by an Ashanti chief. The expedition marched through the jungle and did its stern work till the Ashanti monarch swore to keep a free and open road and to offer no more human sacrifices.

But tropical rains were at hand, and one after another the Europeans were laid low by fever caught in steamy jungle paths. Shergold Smith recovered slowly from the miseries of fever, but only to discover that he had for ever lost the sight of one eye. The jungle had ended his career in the navy; but

the sights he had seen in African villages had called him to another glorious life. When he heard of the plan for carrying a mission to the great lake, he wrote to the Church Missionary Society :—

> 'I love the African and long to preach Christ to him. Send me out in any capacity, I am willing to take the lowest place.'

This man, resourceful, ready with a joke, as sailors are, strong in his God, and brave as a lion, was now to be Mackay's leader. He left the trusty old mate in charge of the *Highland Lassie*, while he himself joined Mackay and O'Neill on board the mail steamer *Cashmere*, which was to take them down the coast of Africa to the island city of Zanzibar, the doorstep of the continent.

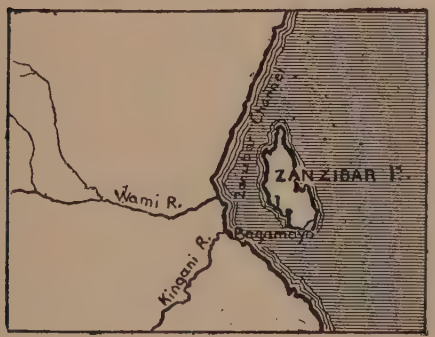
It was a hot voyage ever southward through the long blue surges of the monsoon, where the flying-fish turn their somersaults. For Mackay the greatest interest of those long, hot days on the *Cashmere* was to talk with a merchant from Zanzibar who had himself known David Livingstone.

'Tell me about Dr. Livingstone,' Mackay would say, and de Souza, one of those dull people whose thoughts are all of money, would rattle off exactly how much Livingstone paid him for cloth or beads or provisions. When Mackay wanted memories of the hero himself, de Souza had not much to tell. Oh, yes, he remembered that one of the doctor's arms hung limply by his side, and Mackay knew the

reason, for long ago in Rhynie he had read the story of the lion hunt.

'Livingstone a very good man,' de Souza would wind up, 'oh yes, very good man. Livingstone the best man I have ever seen; good for rich man, good for poor man, good for every man.'

At sunset on May 29 Mackay saw land off the *Cashmere's* port bow. She was nearing the northern part of the long island of Zanzibar where the warm air smells of cloves. Two hours later she was outside Zanzibar harbour under a great white moon, and the captain was saying that they must wait for daylight before he threaded his way in through the coral reefs. But Mackay, eager to set foot on African soil, chaffed his friend the good captain till he was on his mettle and determined to steer the *Cashmere* by moonlight to her moorings. Mackay was proud to lend his binocular to the captain, who spent the whole night on the bridge and brought the *Cashmere* through the reefs to her anchorage in the harbour by eight o'clock next morning.



Mackay stood on the deck, looking around him at the old fort built by Portuguese explorers, the coco-nut palms on the low African coast, the Arab dhows flying across the harbour, and H.M.S. *London* and H.M.S. *Thetis*, British gunboats stationed to catch slave ships. He felt that he had seen it all before, so often had he read of Zanzibar in the books of African travel. But this was only the doorstep of the continent. Mackay wrote in his home letter on that first day in Africa, ' We are at our journey's end—let me rather say beginning.'

CHAPTER IV

THREE TIMES BAFFLED

MACKAY was right, the real journey was yet to come, that march for 700 miles along the narrow paths that run over the face of Africa like cracks on an old oil painting.

Very costly was the journey up to the lake, when for every 60 lb. of luggage you must pay and feed an African porter; costly too in human life, when smallpox ravaged a camp, a snake struck from an overhanging bough, or forest robbers fell upon the hindmost man.

The heaviest toll of sickness was nearest to the coast, for Africa is like a soup-plate upside down, and the low-lying outer rim is the home of her worst fevers. Mackay's party had orders from the Church Missionary Society to find the best and quickest way across this fever belt. 'Two rivers reach the coast near Zanzibar,' the Committee had said; 'explore these unknown streams and learn if either of them will make a waterway up to the high downlands. So doing you might cut 120 miles of forest and swamp off the long, costly march towards the lake.'

So the *Daisy's* trial trip was to be an exploring

voyage, and Mackay and his friends were to be the first white men on the rivers Wami and Kingani.

The sections of the *Daisy* were taken from the hold of the *Cashmere*, and Mackay fitted the little craft together, with the friendly help of the chief engineer on H.M.S. *London*. Then Mackay and Shergold Smith, with a crew of fourteen Africans, started one Monday morning in June, 1876, to explore the Wami River.

As the little steam launch made the river mouth and crept up the winding stream, Shergold Smith with a note-book stood beside an African who took constant soundings with a 10-fathom pole, and Mackay by the engine tried to teach two boys how to make steam and keep it, no easy matter when the coal is dusty and the water thick with mud.

Mackay was now passing into a new world. Hundreds of solemn black-and-white cranes and a few shy savages watched the strange canoe that moved against stream without sail or oar. Hippos stood on the muddy banks ahead of her, their little beady eyes fixed on the *Daisy*. As she came up with them they lumbered into the water and vanished till the strange craft was well past, when they reared their blunt heads with a parting snort at the red ensign flapping from the stern. Once the *Daisy* ran into the middle of a snorting herd. She was going easy, but Mackay switched on full speed ahead, and she came through gallantly with no worse damage

than a great thud on her side that set her rolling like a bobbing cork.

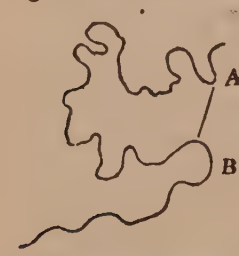
For seven days the little *Daisy* steamed up the Wami, and Mackay and Shergold Smith lived on rice and curry and made maps and charts of the river's course by day, spending their nights in the great solitude of Africa with the blowing of a hippopotamus for lullaby. Mackay had his first experience of the tormenting swarms of African insects.

> 'Small black insects and large white ones,' he says, 'ants, mosquitoes, midges, and every other possible form of insect life which the place could turn out, we found swarming on the awning above our heads, on the dishes, swimming in the tea, blackening the white candle and roasting themselves alive in its flame.'

Never had Mackay seen a river that wound in such a corkscrew course (see p. 32); in half an hour the hills that had seemed in front would be looking over the stern; the water was shallow even for the *Daisy's* light draught; and the African crew said that higher up stream the river banks were bristling with guns like grass. The two explorers decided that this twisting river would never make a useful waterway into the heart of Africa. Then Shergold Smith fell sick with fever, and Mackay as nurse, captain, and engineer all in one, had to guide the *Daisy* back to Zanzibar once more.

On reaching the coast, Mackay at once set to work on a few repairs to the *Daisy's* boiler, and soon had

her ready for her second trip. Very low in the water she looked as she started up the Kingani River, for Mackay had 15 tons of coal on board, and it was all that she could carry. She ran up the mouth of the Kingani River between banks of deadly slime. As night fell those fever-haunted slime banks were still on either hand, and Mackay, who knew the danger of such places, determined to bring his comrades through as fast as possible. Taking a dose of quinine, he stayed up all night and kept the *Daisy* at full speed, now watching through his glass for sunken trees ahead, now sounding the steam-whistle to frighten off sleepy hippos, now waking the slumbering stoker or the boy who should have oiled the engines.



'A Corkscrew Course'

When morning dawned the feverish marsh was past and the *Daisy* ran up into a thickly peopled land. Fathers and mothers, uncles and aunts, and jolly little African children, all came streaming out of their villages to gaze on the white man's canoe as if the little *Daisy* had been a Lord Mayor's show.

Mackay had his first sight of a poisoned arrow, its barb dipped in the red juice of a giant spurge.[1]

[1] Any one who has touched with his tongue the milky white juice of our tiny British spurges can picture the burning poison of those deadly arrows.

A warrior stood brandishing his bow and arrows at the big canoe, but when Mackay turned on the blast of the *Daisy's* whistle, Master Poison-arrows took to his heels, placing his women and children between him and danger. Mackay longed to begin his missionary work then and there, and help to make men of these savages into whose country he was pushing.

When the body of an African baby, drowned because it had cut its first teeth in some 'unlucky' way, came floating down the stream, Mackay longed again to plant a mission in these villages. But he was pledged to Uganda ; other men must carry the message to the Kingani, and he must press on.

The Kingani seemed no better than the Wami as a water-road ; its windings were even more snake-like. With the help of his African crew Mackay tried to learn from the savages on the banks what he should find in the higher reaches of the river.

'Look,' they said, 'see this large stone. We sharpen our arrows on it. The river carried it down to our village in a great flood. Go higher up and you will find all your way blocked with stones like this.'

The savages spoke truth, the river bed grew shallower and more choked, and Mackay slewed the *Daisy* round and took her back to the coast.

The waterways had failed. The long march must begin.

Mackay beached the *Daisy* and unriveted her

sections, which he slung on poles to be carried on African shoulders. On 27 August, 1876, his long caravan filed away into Africa. The Uganda party had divided their enormous caravan into several smaller ones, and Mackay was in charge of 200 porters, 14 so-called soldiers, 3 engine-boys, 4 donkeys, and a little dog. Shergold Smith said there was no one like Mackay for managing a donkey.

By day the long snake of men wound slowly, single file, through forest paths worn by the tread of countless bare brown feet. The path would follow the top of a ridge and then drop suddenly to cross a stream bed full of ferns and pink convolvulus and dancing fireflies. Mackay would rush forward and urge on the four donkeys who one and all ached for a roll in the green feverish swamp water.

When the camping-place was reached, Mackay sat with a bale of cloth, measuring off pieces that reached from his middle finger to his elbow. These were the daily rations, and with them his porters scattered into the surrounding villages to buy to-morrow's food.

Mackay had been hard at work ever since he reached Africa, and now the long marches brought on the fever from which few white men escape in the tropics. His porters had to help him on to one of the pack donkeys. Still he pressed on, eager to reach the lake.

One morning, very early, as the camp stirred to

life, Mackay was told that one of his men had died of smallpox in the night. 'And what did you do with him?' asked Mackay, who was lying racked with fever.

'We took him out of the camp and threw his body into the jungle.'

'Then go out, take your spades and bury him properly.'

A look of stubbornness settled over the men's faces. 'We are Mohammedans,' they said; 'why should we trouble about the body of a pagan unbeliever.'

Mackay did not argue, but determined to show these Mohammedans that a Christian cared for all men. Weak as he was, he staggered up, opened the package of spades, shouldered one and set off to find the body of the dead porter. Two or three of his men followed him with sulky shamefaced looks. Mackay tied a rope round the body with his own hands to save others from infection, and dragging it to a place where the ground was soft, himself dug the porter's grave.

The weary march dragged on. Mackay's best days were those when his caravan and Dr. John Smith's joined forces, and the two friends could march together. His worst were those when the water at halting-places was so evil that to drink it meant certain sickness, and when crowds of curious savages thronged the sick man's tent until he had to take

a ' big oily yellow-ochrey savage ' by the shoulders and push him out with what little strength he had.

At last Mackay could only be carried in a hammock. Dr. John Smith and Lieutenant Shergold Smith held a consultation, and the leader said, ' Mackay, you must go back.'

After all that struggle it was bitter to give in, but Mackay knew that he must obey the leader's orders. One thing only he asked, ' Don't send John back with me.' The doctor was ready to take his friend back to the coast, but Mackay would not leave the others to press on into the unknown without a doctor in the party.

Mackay never saw John Smith again. The friends said good-bye, and Mackay set off alone for the coast, his hammock carried on the shoulders of two strong Africans. The others turned their faces again towards the lake.

Mackay had travelled up two rivers and marched across country for seventy-three days, and after all this he was no nearer to the great lake. But the young Scotsman was quite undaunted.

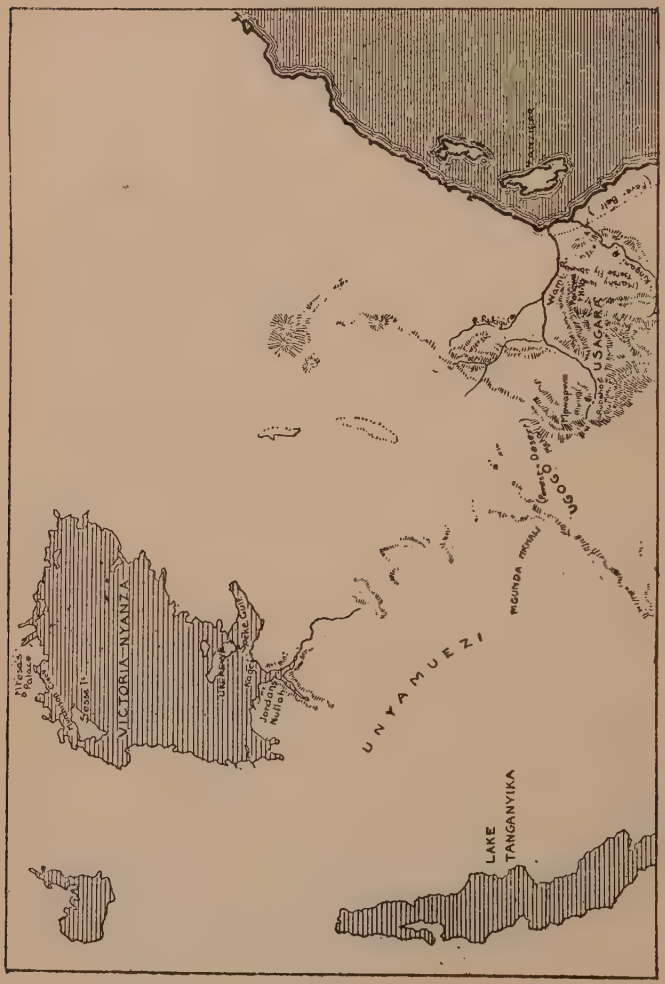
CHAPTER V

THE WHITE MAN'S WIDE TRACK

THE little mission ship *Highland Lassie* was rocking in her moorings off Zanzibar when Mackay reached the coast, and sleeping aboard her, away from the teasing mosquitoes, he soon recovered and would fain be off once more. But his orders told him not to lead another caravan to the great lake until the dangerous rainy months were over in June, 1877.

Having tried both the waterway and the porterway across the swamps to the hills of Usagara, Mackay turned his thoughts to a new plan for shortening the costly journey to the lake. He had some months to spare, and in those months he determined to cut and clear a wagon-track over mile after mile of forest and swamp, up to Mpwapwa in the highlands.

His road would have to be driven over deep channels edged with crimson pinks and hitherto crossed only by a single plank; over the grass jungle with its thickets of cactus and its path marked out by bodies of men whom smallpox had killed on the march; past little villages where men lighted their cooking-fires from the timber of



MACKAY'S TRACK TO UGANDA

glorious ebony trees, once the home of green and yellow parrot families; over long ridges where the higher air was good to breathe and jessamine and syringa sweetened all the way; past fields of millet standing 18 feet from the ground, its slim green pillars twisted round with lilac convolvulus; past the Pongwa hills famous for lions and for deadly snakes; and so along through the district where men's houses and their bodies are smeared with reddish clay; and up through a hilly forest lighted with crimson azaleas, where the water-holes yield a bubbly froth like soap-suds; then down to a terrible jungle of india-rubber trees and creepers as thick as a man's leg, twisted like giant ropes; past secret forest villages hiding behind their great stockades; through green tunnels in a marsh of giant reeds where the soft ground shows the heavy trail of hippos; and on and on, and up, past a sickening line of bodies of slaves who fell by the way, to the high downs where the herds of wild donkeys wander, until at last the hill-side village of Mpwapwa is in sight.

For this stupendous task Mackay had the help of Susi, one of Dr. Livingstone's most faithful African servants, and together they collected the tools for their great undertaking.

18 large American axes.
6 English hatchets.
18 Indian small axes.

20 Snider sword-bayonets.
18 picks.
18 shovels.
2 cross-cut saws.
6 hammers.
1 large forge hammer for driving piles.
1 donkey-load of nails.
1 donkey-load of coco-nut rope.

And Susi would not let Mackay forget to add a small grindstone, for he remembered a journey on which David Livingstone had carried fifty axes, all of which were soon useless, because no village through which they passed could provide such an article.

With much labour Mackay collected a working gang of forty men, but the tools were new to them, and he and Susi spent many an hour showing brawny Africans how to swing an axe or how to wield a pick without damaging their own brown feet. The workmen found to their astonishment that this strange blue-eyed person was set upon clearing a wide track through the land, and would not be turned aside even by the toughest baobab tree whose hard wood turned the axe edge. Mackay heard them sing in a droning chorus as they worked together in the forest :

Eh, Eh, mzungu mbaya
Tukate miti
Tu ende Ulaya.

'Oh, the white man is very bad to make us work

so hard at cutting down trees. Nevertheless let us cut down trees ; let us go to Europe.'

Mackay now lived a camp life beside his unfinished road. His companions were a horse, his little dog Bobbie, a goat, some oxen and donkeys, and all his large family of workmen. From daylight to dark he worked and thought for the road which he drove on inch by inch, fighting his way through jungle and swamp.

In the evenings the road-maker had to see that his men and beasts were fed ; then he would make friends with the chief near whose village his camp was pitched that night, and one and all those chiefs made this white man their ' brother.' If the light held out, Mackay, who had mounted his 2-foot grindstone on a wooden frame, would sharpen the tools for the next day while a crowd of villagers watched, with open eyes and mouths, the magic of the white man, of whose big road they would talk round the fire for many months to come.

Mackay's men went early to sleep, for he asked good work from his road-makers and they were ready for rest. Then he would sit alone in his tent for an hour or so and write to his friends at home, with an old cup for an inkpot, and the insects buzzing round his dim ship's lantern.

Sometimes he told his friends the adventures of the day, how he had built a bridge of timber so iron-hard that he hoped ants would not eat it ;

how the boiling-water ant that lives in trees drops playfully down your neck and bites with a stinging pain ; or how, with slashing strokes of the twenty bayonets his men had let the sunlight into a jungle of trees and prickly creepers so dense that a cat could hardly creep between them.

Sometimes he explained to his friends his reason for all this road-making. ' We are Christian missionaries,' he wrote one evening, ' and our work is the spread of the Gospel to the very ends of the earth. Where we do not find a way by which to enter unknown lands we make it.'

Before turning in, Mackay spoke to the King Whose road-maker he was, and holding the book close to his hurricane lantern, he read a few verses from the Bible. The wild cry that once rang out over the desert, ' Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight,' must often have sounded in Mackay's ears as he bivouacked beside his half-made road.

On 9 August, 1877, the road-head reached Mpwapwa. In that village, famous for its earwigs, Shergold Smith had planted two missionaries to teach the good news and to make a half-way house between the mission stations down at the coast and the mission station to be opened on the shores of the great lake. One of the two was Harry Hartnoll, mate of the *Highland Lassie*, who had already begun to thatch a neat little daub and wattle

cottage, and had sown a crop of French beans which leopards or hyenas tried to scratch up every night.

But Mackay could not stay to help his friends at Mpwapwa. Back to Zanzibar he must go to get wagons and oxen, pack his goods and start over the 230 miles of his new track towards the lake, travelling as David Livingstone had so often travelled in South Africa, with teams of long-horned oxen.

News had come to Mackay from his comrades who had reached the lake. Where the tall heads of millet drooped heavily to the ground beside the moaning waters of that inland sea, they had dug a white man's grave. The body of Dr. John Smith, worn out with the African climate, had been buried there by his comrades.

'My noble and good brother,' wrote Mackay; 'I shall never see his like again.' Henceforth Mackay was more than ever a man of one purpose, to reach the great lake and carry on the work for which his friend's life had been given.

At Zanzibar, to his great delight, he found a first-rate young carpenter named Tytherleigh, sent out to help him by the Church Missionary Society. Tytherleigh worked like a horse, and helped Mackay strengthen four stout teak carts from Bombay, and two lighter ones which they had built in Zanzibar with solid wheels encased in iron rings. All these they made stouter still, adding brakes and supplying

each cart with the new flag which Mackay had chosen for the mission, a red cross on a blue ground.

When their goods were loaded and ninety-four strong oxen bought and trained, they started out with much yelling and cracking of whips. Harder than training the oxen they found the training of the men to drive long teams. The carts went bumping along, now butting into a tree, now jolting over an enormous stone, and sometimes upsetting by the way. When a river had to be crossed Mackay would often find his front driver hopelessly stuck, with his team following its own sweet will. One great beast would be lying down in the water; one, having broken loose, would be happily exploring the neighbourhood; while several more would have their faces to the wagon where their tails should be.

Then Mackay must patiently begin at the beginning and put things right again. Much patience too was needed when the villagers had sown their millet all over his newly cleared track, and considered that the caravan had no business to travel over their nice new garden. Some of the finest oxen, on whose beauty and strength Mackay prided himself, were highland cattle, and the dampness of the coast climate killed them before many marches were over.

Still the caravan was jogging along, and Mackay wrote, 'Work with oxen seems to give one life in this climate.' On the evening of Christmas Day, 1877,

he sat in the bush amid growling hyenas, a lantern and a rifle at his side, and wrote home a description of his travels with the oxen:—

> 'You should see me every day,' he said, 'with clothes bespattered with mud, and hands black like a sweep's, catching the spokes of the wheels every now and then as they get into holes, and yelling at the top of my voice to the oxen, till the forest resounds again. . . . When I get into camp I am always quite hoarse.'

On arriving at a camping place an enclosure had to be built for the cattle and the four donkeys with loads of nails and bolts. Mackay and Tytherleigh saw that the oxen were well rubbed with petroleum to keep off bites of deadly insects. They even rubbed the five dogs whose barking guarded the cattle at night; and their own wrists, and the shoulder of some rheumatic African driver would come in for a share of this wonderful oil.

One day the caravan came to a sudden halt. Several thunderstorms with their deluges of tropical rain had turned the Rukigura River into a rushing flood too deep for the wagons.

'We can't get over,' said the drivers.

'We *must* get over', said Mackay; 'which of you can swim well? The strongest swimmers shall take one end of this thin cord across the river. It is no weight to carry.'

Much puzzled as to the use of that thin string when more than six cartloads of goods, each weighing

1,400 lbs., had to be taken across the roaring flood, the swimmers obeyed. Mackay tied a stout rope to the end of the thin cord and told the men on the other bank to haul it across and make it fast to a tree.

A very weak swimmer could cross now, with a rope to cling to all the way, and Mackay ordered half his men to the other side.

Meanwhile he and Tytherleigh took one of the teak carts off its wheels, and caulked up every crack with cloth and clay.

'Here is a square barge,' Mackay explained to his men. 'We will fix these small pulleys to our rope, and then with half of us one side and half the other, we can haul the barge backwards and forwards with our goods.'

Chattering with delight at Mackay's wonderful cleverness, the men hauled and heaved with a will, and though the luggage was well splashed it all crossed safely and was dumped in a great pile on the farther bank. Afterwards the empty carts were hauled across.

When night fell, Mackay with a huge pile of goods was on one side of the Rukigura, and Tytherleigh with the lowing and stamping oxen on the other. Mackay made his supper of soaking biscuit and laid his plans for getting the oxen across in the morning.

He had in his herd a cow with a calf, and his first plan was to put the calf in the barge and haul it

'A large black ox dumped him into the river'

across, in the hope that the cow would follow and lead the herd after her. It worked well up to a point. The whole herd splashed into the water and started across stream, but only to think better of it and land again on the side they started from. Mackay then decided that each great beast would have to be roped and dragged across separately; and well mauled he was, before the business was over, by a large black ox which decided not to be roped, caught Mackay between its long horns, tore his clothes to shreds and dumped him with a satisfactory splash into the river.

A greater difficulty than a flooded river faced Mackay in early spring. This was a brownish fly which attacked his oxen. The bite of the dreaded tsetse fly is fatal to cattle, and half the oxen died while the other half were ailing. Mackay's courage never left him. 'The garden of the devil cannot be reclaimed for God all in a year,' he said. After a day spent in repairing carts beside his track in a lonely forest he wrote:—

> 'This will certainly be yet a highway for the King Himself, and all that pass this way will come to know His name.'

CHAPTER VI

THE *DAISY* ON THE LAKE

ONE morning, after a night in which he had been three times attacked by scorpions, Mackay rose before dawn and started onward with all that was left of his cavalcade of oxen.

The wheels had hardly begun to rumble through the grey morning air when runners came up panting with letters for the white man. The news Mackay read was grave indeed. Shergold Smith the leader, and O'Neill the Irishman, whom the Africans called 'O'Neely' and loved at once for his merry kindly ways, had both been killed in a brawl at the south of the great lake, where a fugitive had fled to them for protection.

Of eight men who had started for Uganda, only one had reached that land. The Rev. C. T. Wilson had crossed the lake and was now a solitary white man in the capital of the African monarch, Mtesa.

A look of resolve came over Mackay's face as he read the letters. He must press on with all speed to Uganda to relieve his lonely comrade. Leaving Tytherleigh to send on the heavy luggage as best he might, Mackay started off with a very small caravan to finish the journey by forced marches.

With unresting energy he pressed forward through Ugogo,—a weary, sandy land, where the deepest shadows are thrown by monstrous boulders twisted in uncouth shapes. There the water holes must be grubbed out to a depth of thirty feet, but farther on in the plain of Marenga Mkali no drop of water and no human dwelling could he find for forty miles.

He marched through the 'Terrible Garden' (Mgunda Mkali), dreaded by caravans. Here the track was littered with skeletons and skulls, and for a hundred miles no food and very little water could be found. This was the home of the Ruga-Ruga, robbers who lurk among the grey and purple-barked leafless trees of that dreadful forest. They fall upon the weak and weary straggler with their spears and hatchets, kill him and seize his load. When the next caravan passes one more skeleton is whitening beside the track.

Mackay came at length to low hills piled with boulders of granite that made him think of Aberdeen. The country looked as though some giant baby had played at making strongholds and then with a chuckle had toppled them all over, as babies will.

Not a single pair of socks was left, and Mackay staggered painfully on his blistered feet as he climbed a little hill at the end of his day's march on the evening of 12 June, 1878. A cool breeze kissed his sun-bronzed face; surely it was fresher than any of the breezes that had met him on the march!

He pressed on to the brow of the hill, and there before him was a shimmer of silvery grey, the flash of waters as far as the eye could reach. The lake at last! The miseries of the long march were over.

He thought of an old story he had read with his father of a Greek army, toilworn and homesick, on its return from a war in the plains of Babylon. After many a weary month of marching and fighting their homeward way across vast stretches of tawny plateau and through the wild mountains of Armenia, the soldiers saw below them the blue waters that led to their sea-kissed home. Then the whole army broke into one mighty shout: 'The sea! The sea!'; and while some laughed like happy children, others wept and clung together in a joy greater than they could bear.

To-morrow Mackay would walk down to Kagei, the little village at the south end of Victoria Nyanza, in whose sheltered cove the *Daisy* lay beached. Soon he hoped to cross that shining water to Uganda on the northern coast. His sleep was sweet that night.

Next day he made his tea with water from the great lake, and very good soft water he found it. He explored Kagei cove with its little breakwater, built by Shergold Smith to shield the mission boats. Then he found the *Daisy* buried under a great heap of grass to keep her from the warping rays of the African sun.

The *Daisy* and her master were both worn by their travels, and Mackay saw that he must spend many an hour before she took to the water again. Not a plank was sound. The teeth of a hippopotamus had scrunched through some, white ants had eaten

away others, and the sun, more powerful than either, had split or warped the rest.

Mackay went on to the large hut which the chiefs had lent his comrades for storing their luggage. Piled in heaps he found 'boiler shells and books, cowrie-shells and candle moulds, papers and piston-rods, steam-pipes and stationery, printers' types

and tent poles, carbolic acid, cartridges, and chloroform, saws and garden-seeds, travelling trunks and toys, tins of bacon and bags of clothes, pumps and ploughs, portable forges and boiler-fittings.' Everything was in confusion, rats had nested in the rain-gauge and the books were in the boiler, but to his great delight he found his engines all complete.

Much work had to be done before the *Daisy* could carry Mackay across the lake to Wilson in Uganda, and for the present he settled down among the folk in Kagei. The little African children whom O'Neill had begun to teach were delighted to see another white man. They ran about shouting 'A, B, C, Eckiss, Y, Z,' looking round with bewitching smiles to see if Mackay was noticing that they could say the white man's funny words. Mackay soon made friends with the village folk who were never tired of watching his strange ways. They could not imagine why a man who had plenty of beads to buy food should toil so hard all day. When he might have been lying at ease under a tree like the men of Kagei, who left hard work to women, they saw him on the beach sawing logs from a wrecked slave dhow whose timbers were now to mend the mission ship.

Hour after hour Mackay spent at work on the beach at Kagei, where he learnt something of the teeming life of the great lake. Sometimes columns of dense brown smoke would float over the water miles away. He wondered at first if these were

water-spouts, but learnt that they were myriads of swarming flies. At sunset after rain a fairy sight was seen as thousands of dragon-flies came out and danced over the pink and purple water-lilies. One of the noblest creatures of the lake was the great chocolate and white fish-eagle, which went screaming by, the full spread of its wings stretching for more than six feet.

A school of hippos enjoying themselves in a creek was a fascinating sight. Mackay decided that there was something of the pig and something of the horse about these lumbering beasts. They snorted like horses, he said, and grunted like pigs ; they charged an enemy like horses and wallowed in the mud like pigs. Sometimes the men of Kagei had a hippo hunt with heavy iron-headed spears. Then Mackay would have hippo steak for supper. He said it tasted like beef, but his advice to his friends was always to boil it well ; when fried it is tough as leather.

When the timber was sawn on the beach, Mackay persuaded some friendly men of Kagei to help him carry the sections of the *Daisy* to the shelter of a great fig tree in their village. In that green tent he toiled all day, sprawling on the ground under the *Daisy* with his hammer or chisel, nailing a sheet of zinc or lead over a damaged timber, or caulking her leaking seams with cotton wool which he gathered himself from bushes near the lake.

'Truly white men came from heaven,' said the men of Kagei as they watched him perform some wonder with his screwdriver or turning-lathe or hand-mill. But Mackay called out one or another from the wondering group and made them see that Africans, too, could learn to use his magic-working tools.

'We white men were once just like you,' he said: 'we wore no clothes, we carried bows and arrows and spears, and we never dreamed of any of these tools. But God began to teach us and we have learned. You can learn too.'

When Mackay stopped work there was a race among the small boys of the village. Each wanted the honour of fetching a piece of glowing wood to light the white man's pipe.

But surprises were never to cease in Kagei village. One morning their white man, who seemed to live for his big canoe, did not even come up to the fig tree to look at her. He sat near his hut and was turning over a book. The village folk must go and see what the wonder-worker was doing to-day. Mackay looked up and smiled at the circle of dark faces, chief Kaduma's among them; an opportunity had come to him.

'This is God's book that I am reading,' he said, 'and the great God has told us in His book to do no work one day in seven, but to keep it as a great day in His honour.'

Chief Kaduma was much interested, and Mackay told him the story of the beginning of the world and of the Sabbath rest of God. Kaduma listened well, though the lesson was often interrupted by fights among the village cattle. Later Mackay found a chance of telling some of the stories of the Son of God Who died for chief Kaduma as well as for the white men.

One evening when the *Daisy* was nearly ready to launch, Mackay was standing on the beach. He thought he saw dim forms coming across the lake. As they drew nearer he made out seven long canoes of slender, graceful build, far better than the dug-out boats of the Kagei villagers. The graceful prows of these new canoes had antelope horns for figure-heads. Could they bring some message from Uganda? Just then two shots rang out across the water and Mackay's heart leapt for joy. That was the signal of the Uganda mission party. Wilson, in his solitary post in Uganda, must have heard of Mackay's arrival, and have crossed the lake to meet him.

Mackay peered through the darkness and soon made out the form of a white man sitting by the steersman of the leading canoe and telling him how to come in through the heavy surf to the shelter of Kagei cove. Then out he leapt, and the two friends, sole survivors of the mission party, wrung each other's hands. Mackay carried Wilson off to his hut to change his wave-drenched clothes, and the two

men talked on and on, too glad to think of sleep, till the cocks of Kagei village were crowing in the morning.

At last the little *Daisy* was launched once more, and showed herself seaworthy. Mackay and Wilson, with a crew of fourteen Baganda, set sail on 23 August, 1878.

On the fifth day the wind dropped dead, and with a sudden awful roar a tropical thunderstorm burst over the lake, the flashes showing up the mountains on the coast in a livid light of battle. The little *Daisy* was too frail a craft to outlive bad weather in mid-lake. Like those old-time vessels in which St. Paul used to sail the Mediterranean, she did best when she hugged the coast. Seeing that the weather had broken up, Mackay and Wilson thought it wiser now to put her in towards the shelter of the land.

But the sails flapped idly ; there was no wind to carry even that light craft. All hands were ordered to the oars, and though the Baganda crew, used only to spoon-shaped paddles, made a poor hand at rowing, the *Daisy* crawled on, the thunder rolling overhead, until at four o'clock in the morning she made the coast.

Mackay found bottom at 14 fathoms, and anchored the *Daisy* about a hundred yards from shore ; then, so dog-tired that no thunderstorm could have kept them awake for many moments, he and Wilson fell into an exhausted sleep.

They woke next day to find the *Daisy* tossing madly in a stormy sea. The tide was running in, and the wind was rushing down to meet it. Where the two came to grips the waves were lashed into wild surf that hurled itself over the little *Daisy's* gunwale.

'Out with the poles,' called Mackay; 'now keep her head square to the waves.' He was tearing down the supports of the awning as he spoke, and with those and the sails he rigged up a breastwork above the gunwale on the weather side, so keeping out wave after wave that threatened to swamp the boat.

She was dancing like a mad thing, caught in that seething, tearing rush of water; but Mackay had hope for her until, under the heavy blow of one great wave, she lurched so far that her bowsprit caught beneath the anchor chain. The next moment, as she tried to right herself, the bowsprit tore away and with it several yards of gunwale on her port bow. It was impossible that the now defenceless *Daisy* should live in such a sea, and the Baganda crew chattered and screamed in terror as the green waves heaved over her side.

'We must run her ashore before she sinks, and save the goods,' said Mackay and Wilson quietly. They rallied the crew, and the *Daisy*, already half full of water, was with difficulty headed round. Then the anchor chain was dragged up, and the moment

she was free from its control the mad waves drove the little *Daisy* racing on to the unknown shore.

As soon as her keel grated, the men leapt out and strained every muscle to drag her up the steep beach which was shrieking under the waves. Then, all soaked as they were, they rescued the *Daisy's* cargo, carrying it up beyond the reach of the waves that were banging their little boat to bits.

As the storm died down they took the masts and oars and sails, and rigged up tents to shelter the goods from the rain and from covetous eyes. Then they crawled gladly into the shelter to find dry clothes and food.

When the storm was over the men of that coast came down to gaze with astonishment at the strange guests whom the lake had thrown upon their beach. Mackay told the chief that he wanted to shelter there until his big canoe was mended and could carry him on to Uganda.

The chief had some drums beaten, and at once the loafers, who had been gazing at the *Daisy's* cargo and begging for presents, hurried off to fetch leafy branches which they wove quickly into huts for Mackay and Wilson and the rest. Others brought loads of plantains and a bullock as a present from the chief.

Mackay and Wilson spent eight weeks as the guest of this friendly chief, and not for many months did Mackay know that Stanley had almost been

murdered on this very spot. Stanley's gentleness and generosity to those who made the attack had led the chief and his men to think that white men were good and should be welcome guests.

The *Daisy* was a sad sight as she lay forlorn after the storm. Her side had been literally torn away from the keel, and Mackay was at his wits' end how to mend her. There was no seasoned timber to be had for love or money, and green wood was worse than useless. So Mackay determined, as he said, to make a pair of shoes out of a pair of boots. He cut away the *Daisy's* middle section and broke it up as timber for repairs to the rest. Then he joined together the fore and aft sections, and there lay the *Daisy*, a stumpy little boat, but seaworthy once more.

Mackay, who loved her all the better after the hours of labour she had cost him, declared that twenty-seven feet of length to a six-foot beam was a far better proportion than the long and slender forty-two by six with which she had started in life.

'Ekyoma, Ekyoma!' 'It is strong as iron now!' said the chief and his men as the *Daisy* slid into the water, and Mackay and Wilson waved their good-byes, and set out northwards for the Uganda shore.

CHAPTER VII

HOISTING THE FLAG AT COURT

On 1 November, 1878, the Baganda [1] loafing on the shore at their port of Entebbe raised a shout. The white man's boat was coming over the lake. They beat the drums merrily and made such a hubbub, as they manned a long canoe, that the crocodiles sleeping on the sunny beach half opened one wicked little eye to see what it was all about. The canoe men paddled out merrily, drums booming, to welcome Wilson and the new white man, Mackay.

As the space between the canoe and the *Daisy* lessened, Mackay could hear the rowers singing some such song as this:

> Many men are dead;
> For them we are sorry,
> For they never saw the white man.
> We have seen the white man,
> And we are glad.

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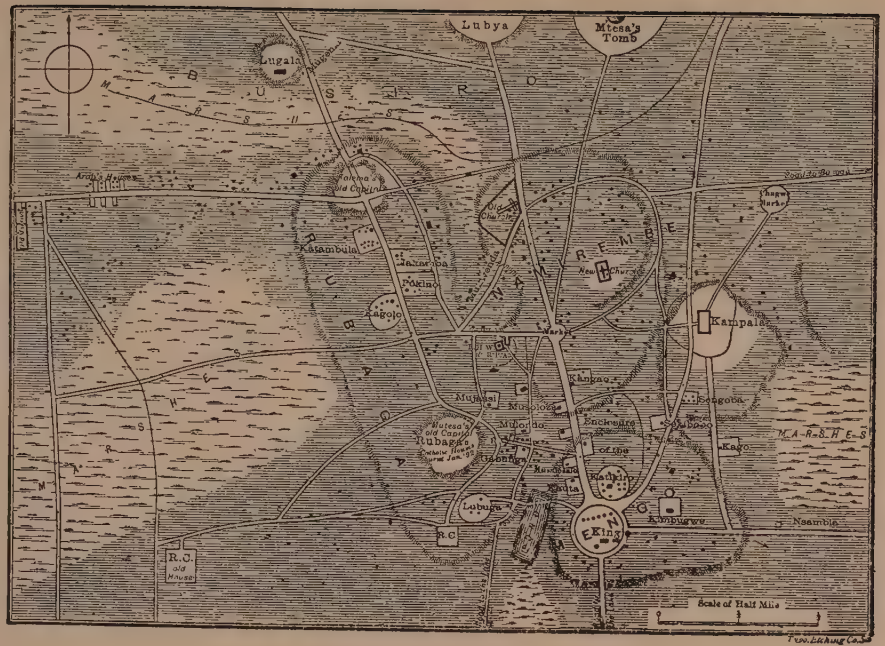
[1] The rest of this book will be easier to follow if you know this much of the language of Uganda:

Buganda is the native name of the country. It is now used only of the kingdom of Buganda, and the protectorate, which includes several other kingdoms and countries, bears the name of *Uganda*.

Muganda is an inhabitant of the country, and *Baganda* is the plural of *Muganda*.

Luganda is the language of Uganda.



PLAN OF THE CAPITAL OF UGANDA

Mackay gazed with interest at the welcoming crowd of tall, handsome people in graceful robes of red-brown bark-cloth knotted over one shoulder. He had heard how the Baganda beat out the fibrous bark of a kind of fig tree into flat sheets of cloth. Now Wilson told him that the lovely shades of ruddy brown came from the bark of a shrub like laurustinus. The Baganda wounded the stem till an orange sap oozed out, smelling like ripest apples and hardening into a gum that dyed their cloth.

Wilson led Mackay up the twelve miles of road from the lake to King Mtesa's capital, and a wonderful road it seemed after the narrow one-man tracks of the long march from the coast.

Sometimes the road was a causeway of sand and timber crossing a swamp of fathomless black mud; again it passed into the shadow of the high woods of Uganda, dim places where the great gaboon puff-adder hung motionless from the trees and grey-faced monkeys chattered over nuts. Again the road plunged outwards to the sunshine, where it ran, a ribbon of bright red earth, beside banana-groves whose great leaves make the brightest green upon God's earth. Here a herd of buffaloes greedy for fruit had trampled clumsily, crushing down the trees and leaving the havoc of a tempest; but for the most part the gardens were guarded by the beautiful fences which the Baganda make of golden reed-stems from their swamps, choosing smooth

reeds of even size, and lashing them side by side to strong supports.

It was an uphill march, for the kings of Uganda built their palaces of reed and thatch on the crest of some pleasant hill.[1]

'Home at last after a thousand days of wandering,' said Mackay when he walked at length into Wilson's little mission house. The home that he found was a house of plaited reeds, its thatched roof resting on a forest of poles. It was built at the top of a fine hill looking across a green valley to that other hill on which Mtesa's reed-built palace stood.

Mtesa and Mackay had yet to meet. The king was ill when the white men arrived, but in a few days panting figures, clad in long white tunics and red shoes, rushed to the mission house.

'Hasten! Hasten!' said these royal messengers. 'The Kabaka (king) is in his court. He wishes to see the new white man. Hasten! Hasten!' A servant who loitered on the business of the king of Uganda might have both his legs broken when he returned to the palace, so the royal messengers were always in breathless haste.

Mackay and Wilson picked up the new musical box and the other presents which they had brought

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[1] The capital of Uganda was on a group of hills. King Mtesa's palace was built on a hill called Rubaga. His successor, King Mwanga, chose a hill called Mengo, and the royal palace is there to this day.

for Mtesa, and followed the palace servants down the hill. As they went, other hot and panting messengers rushed up with the cry, 'Hasten! Hasten!' and the passers-by put down their loads and ran into the tall roadside grass that the way might be clear for the king's guests.

The path dipped down into the valley and passed up again on the other side. And now for the first time Mackay walked up the wide street leading to the palace. A royal musician marched before him beating a drum and crying plaintively, 'Ya-a-a-a'!

Other folk, too, were going to the court up that great street with golden-brown fences of plaited reed on either hand. Mackay saw chiefs in long white robes, with a stream of servants behind them, and drums and flutes to clear the way ahead. Their jesters enlivened the walk by turning somersaults and imitating jackals or jibbering apes.

At the top of the hill a gate in the high reed fence slid back, and Mackay and Wilson walked through the royal courtyards where Mtesa's body-guard presented arms. They passed into the ante-chamber, full of page-boys whose business was to carry the stools or mats of the great chiefs, to fan the flies from royal faces, or even to beat Mtesa's wives if that were the tyrant's fancy.

One more door, and the missionaries stood in the long, dark reception hall.

That was a notable day when Mtesa, who held in

his hand the lives of the people of Uganda, was face to face for the first time with Mackay, the dauntless servant of Christ. For the next five years these two men were to be the greatest figures in Uganda's story.

Mtesa was unwell. To-day he had not girt on his richly-mounted sword, nor did he sit upon the chair of state on the royal leopard-skin. His long figure, in a white Arab robe and a gold-embroidered coat, was resting listlessly upon a mat. Mackay and Wilson came in and set their stools upon the rush-strewn floor as was the custom of the chiefs at court. Mtesa lifted his big lustrous eyes for a lazy stare at Mackay, and for ten minutes there was silence except for the booming of the palace drums.

At length Mackay presented his gifts, and wound up the new musical-box which began to play a tune called, 'The Heavens are telling.' Mtesa looked languidly at his presents, fingered them with his finely-shaped hands, and then told the white men that he was too ill to hold court any longer.

They rose, and the court of Uganda rose too and followed them down the hill; those page-boys were not going to miss a chance of staring at the wonderful strangers.

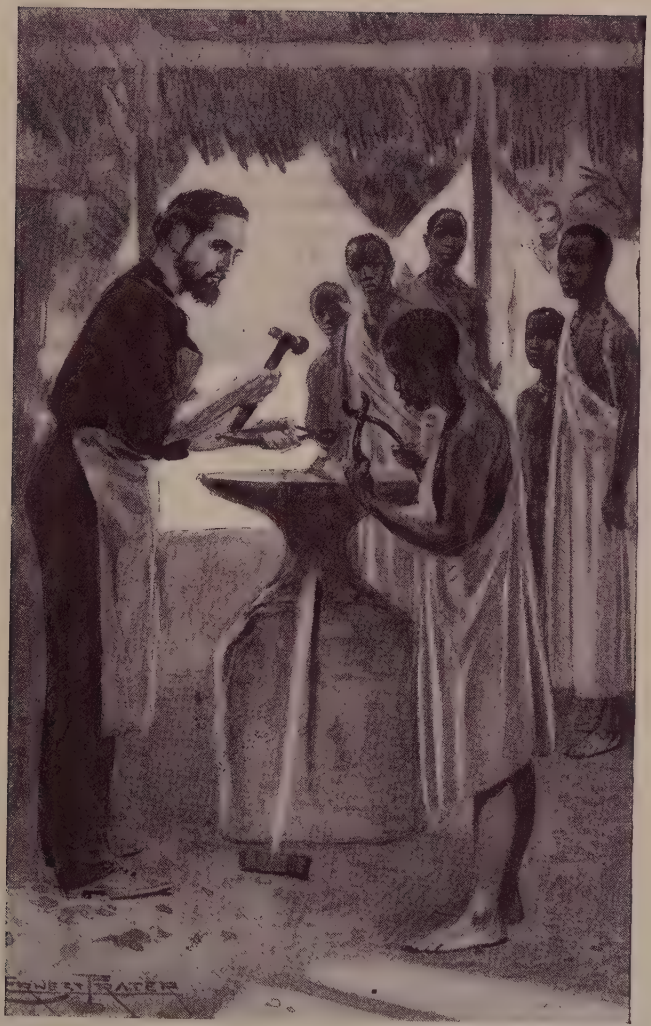
Once inside their hut on the opposite hill, the missionaries asked one another whether the tyrant of Uganda meant to be their friend. Mtesa had said nothing to show whether he approved of the

new white man; but in the evening ten fat oxen were driven up to the mission house—a royal gift to show that Mackay had pleased the king.

Busy days now began, as Mackay set up his forge, his lathe and grindstone. Mtesa and his chiefs were delighted to have a man-of-all-work, and brought their broken treasures to be mended or their hoes to be sharpened. Mackay was glad to make friends by means of his clever hands, for he wanted to win a hearing for his message.

Every Sunday morning he walked up the palace hill, and the king's flag, an untidy jumble of red, white, and blue rags, was hoisted while Mtesa and his chiefs had prayers and Bible lesson. To offend Mtesa was to court death, but Mackay taught fearlessly. He said: 'I make no mincing of matters. When I have to say what goes hard against heathen custom and pride and love of self, I give my message, saying it is not mine but God's command.'

Sometimes Mackay would give the king a picture lesson. He had some lenses with him, and soon made a magic lantern from a biscuit tin, burning castor oil, squeezed out of berries from his garden, in the lamp. Once he took the king a drawing showing how the blood is pumped by the heart and circulates ceaselessly through every corner of the human body. Mtesa gazed with much interest, and first began to see the marvel that it was to be a man. When Mackay saw the look of wonder dawning in



'Mackay was glad to make friends by means of his clever hands'

the king's eyes he turned and asked him why he, the king and father of his country, was ever ready to sell his subjects, such wondrous human beings, to any Arab who offered soap or cartridges.

'From henceforth no slave shall be sold out of my country,' said Mtesa with a look of shame.

For the moment he probably meant what he said.

Mackay soon found that Uganda was a land of fear. Mtesa sometimes behaved like a butcher, and then men trembled at his wholesale executions. But there were other fears. Hidden away in the banana groves were little devil-houses, and even a great chief would sacrifice a white cock or carry a charm to save him from lurking evil spirits.

One day Mackay was teaching at the palace when the door was darkened by the strange figures of several witch-doctors, servants of evil, who shook their magic wands. All the court looked on with awe as one of these magic-men came forward to the king, bearing a bundle of grasses dipped in blood.

Mtesa put out his hand and touched the bundle, which was then laid in the doorway, an offering to the spirits of evil.

Mackay watched in silence. Mtesa, who sometimes said, 'Isa (Jesus)—is there any one like Him?' was setting a devil's mark at his door in the presence of the Christian teacher. Mackay knew that he must speak, cost what it might. He gathered his

thoughts together in the Swahili language which he used at court and said:—[1]

'Mtesa, you are a great king, and your land of Uganda is great. Other kings less great than you do not know the true way of worship. But *you* know, and you have shown your greatness by being ready to learn the worship of the one true God and His Son, Isa Masiya. To-day it seems that some of your subjects want you to give up the true God and to worship other gods.'

All the chiefs in the court sat dumb with horror at the boldness of Mackay, as he stepped across to the doorway, and kneeling down took one of the blood-stained charms in his hand.

'These are poor gods,' he said, looking at the withered grass-stems. 'Is not the God of Heaven far greater than a bunch of grass? You insult the great God if you think luck will come from this dead stuff. Good luck comes from God alone.'

The chiefs were horrified. Mackay was speaking against the customs of their land. Surely the king would have him killed. They broke into the middle of his speech with the cry:—

'It is *desturi* (custom).'

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[1] Mackay has given us in his diary an account of this speech to Mtesa. Of course the actual words were in Swahili, but this must be very close to what he said. Swahili is understood all over East Africa, and Mackay could talk to the king and chiefs in this language while he was learning Luganda, the proper language of the country and the only tongue which the common people knew.

'It is a foolish custom,' said Mackay. 'Is not grass in the jungle and grass in the doorway just the same? A mouthful for a cow.'

Then the chiefs grew heated and began to say that they had too much nowadays of all this white man's talk. Half of the white man's religion and half of their own would be the easier and the better way, they said.

'Have I not read to you the words of Isa?' answered Mackay. 'He said a new, strong piece of cloth should not be sewn upon a rotten threadbare garment. You must have all the new faith or all the old. These are not the words of a mere Msungu (European); they are the words of Muungu (God).'

Excited talk went backwards and forwards after this. Mackay listened patiently, watching Mtesa. At times the king grew hot with indignation at the man who dared to interfere. Then a better mood came over him. Mackay took note of this, and coming forward asked boldly for leave to take away the spirit-offerings from the doorway and burn them every one.

Mtesa suddenly turned to a servant. 'Take them all away,' he said, pointing to the bundles of grass; and the day was won.

When he came out of the court, the chiefs of Uganda crowded round Mackay, all anxious to embrace the man who had dared, unarmed, to brave

the anger of the king and the witch-doctors. Mackay went home and thanked God for a victory.

But many times Mackay went home with a heavy heart. Mtesa was only a poor weathercock, veering round with every changing wind.

'I wish to be baptized, and my chiefs,' he would say sometimes, thinking to show Mackay a favour.

'You shall be baptized when you are ready to live as Christians,' said Mackay. 'I see no one yet laying aside stealing, witchcraft, murder, and such-like.' Then Mtesa would hastily turn to talk of something else. Mackay knew well that the victory of God had not been gained in this poor shifty soul, but he had better hopes of other pupils.

In Africa time counts for very little, and often the king would keep the missionaries waiting in his courtyards for hours at a time. They were not lost hours, for Mackay soon made friends with the white-robed page-boys, sons of nobles, who also had long hours of waiting and loafing round the courts and store-rooms. These merry, good-natured boys delighted to slip away to the mission house and gaze at Mackay's work at the forge or lathe. He seemed a great magician to them, but they trusted him and loved him. 'His heart is good,' they said to one another.

His boy friends were Mackay's best pupils. For them he got out the little printing-press that had stood in the Rhynie attic ; and for them he carved

SPECIMENS OF MACKAY'S WOOD-CARVING

(1) Candlestick; (2) Letter Blocks for Printing Reading Sheet

wooden types of large clear letters for printing alphabet sheets. He cut these on the hard wooden blocks at the back of the capital letters in his old printer's type. The wood was so hard that it took him a whole day to cut ten letters, but when the work was done he printed off some reading sheets and carried them up to the palace.

Mtesa was delighted, handing round the papers to all his courtiers. 'Learn quickly,' he commanded them, 'learn quickly'; and many of them did, for the Baganda are clever people.

But Mackay's boy friends learnt fastest.

He now knew enough of the language to be able to write out St. Matthew's Gospel in Luganda with the help of some of his boys, and soon he printed chapters of the Gospel with his small lead type. From morning to night the mission house was crowded with boys and men, and the hum of their reading aloud was in Mackay's ears all day long. Some on the veranda would struggle with the alphabet, sitting in a circle round one precious reading sheet, and learning the letters upside down or sideways, but determined to learn them somehow. Others sat round Mackay in the workshop having their spelling lesson or their Scripture lesson while he stood at the carpenter's bench. The little printing-press could hardly work fast enough for the numbers who wanted to learn.

Mackay watched his pupils and saw that some

of the boys were learning more than reading. As they spelt out the story of our Lord, a strange new light came into their faces. The tyrant's page-boys were getting their first sight of Christ, the King.

'Really there is nothing else so well worth living for,' said Mackay as he thought over the beginnings of his work in Uganda.

CHAPTER VIII

THE 'LUBARE' OF THE LAKE

MACKAY'S boys had many a laugh as their teacher learnt Luganda. He would sneeze or fall down, dig a hole or crow like a cock, while with shouts of laughter they told him the word he wanted.

As he listened and learned to understand the talk around him, it seemed that in palace or peasant's hut one word was on all lips. With awestruck voices the Baganda spoke of 'lubare.' At dawn when the people rose they threw a charm of grass and bark-cloth out of the door of their huts, saying, 'Here, lubare, this is yours.' Till this was done no Baganda ventured out. When they manned their canoes for a voyage one of the boatmen would hold out two bananas on his paddle, and dropping them into the lake would cry, 'Take this, Mukasa Lubare, and give us a good journey.' The canoe that started without this offering would be swallowed up in the waters of the lake, they said.

Mackay had come out to Uganda without any very clear idea of the evil forces that held the people's lives, though he knew that never yet were Christ's battles won without a struggle.

Now he met some of the enemy forces under this

name of 'lubare,' for he found that 'lubare' meant spirit or devil, and one lubare was said to dwell on a mountain top and bring smallpox to the land, while the greatest lubare was called lord of the lake, and had power to drown you if your canoe travelled against his will. This spirit of the lake was said to dwell in a human being, filled with magic powers, who told the secrets of the deep to the king of Uganda. Mukasa was the name always given to the man or woman who thus set up to be the ambassador of evil spirits; and in Mackay's time Mukasa was a shrivelled old woman, living on an island in the lake.

Mackay saw that a battle must be fought. Mtesa, the wobbler, would have liked to wobble to the end of the chapter; but a man must come to a decision some time; the choice would have to be made between Christ and the lubare.

The old witch-woman of the lake prepared for battle too; she was quite clever enough to see that if Mtesa listened to Mackay her power would be gone and all the riches and the gardens which the people gave to the lubare priests. She determined to make a supreme effort to rid the country of the white men.

All unknown to Mackay she laid her plans.

She sent for the Gabunga or admiral of the king's canoes, ordering him to go to court and tell Mtesa that Mukasa had medicine which would cure him of a long-standing ailment.

'Bring the medicine, then,' said Mtesa.

It was brought, but with it came a message to say that it was of no avail unless the witch herself came to perform the cure.

So it came to pass that Mackay, digging in his garden, heard furious drum-beating about a mile to the south-west. Mukasa had left the lake and was welcomed by Toli, the king's chief drummer, outside the capital, only waiting till the night of the new moon to go up to the palace and cure the king by her spells. When Mackay heard this news he knew that Mtesa's decision hour had come. He went up to the court where the old heathen chiefs and the queen-mother were busy whispering in Mtesa's ear, and urging him to welcome the lubare and have nothing more to do with the white man's religion. At the side of the hall were the executioners with caps of twisted rope, their faces hidden by fringes of dangling string.

'I sit before you,' said Mackay to the king, 'your servant and the servant of almighty God, and in His name I beg of you to have no dealings with this "lubare."'

Mtesa seemed to agree, and Mackay went on:—

'If Mukasa is a god, there are two gods in Uganda, the Lord God Almighty and Mukasa; but if Mukasa is only a man, then there are two kings in Uganda, Mtesa and this Mukasa.'

Mtesa understood perfectly, but he would not act

firmly. He told Mackay that he was going to call a council of his chiefs to settle whether to receive the witch into the palace.

For days the struggle went on in Mtesa's mind. Mackay did all he could to help the king. He mended his steel pincers for him, and indeed toiled daily at the forge to prove his friendship, while he went constantly to the court to talk to the wavering king, who several times confessed that he knew spirit-worship was wrong.

'But what can I do?' he said. 'My mother and the old chiefs and the keepers of the royal graves all want me to bring Mukasa to court. Shall I tell you, Mackay, what I think of these sorcerers?'

'Tell me.'

'Well, I believe what you say; every lubare is a liar, and deceives the people to get food.' The older chiefs scowled as Mtesa spoke these bold words.

'You can have any one to court whom you please,' said Mackay, 'but you must understand that you cannot have lubare and Christ too.'

Christmas week came, and Mtesa, frightened by four or five of the older chiefs who threatened to depose him, made his decision. But he made it in secret like a coward. One of Mackay's boy friends came one evening and said: 'All the chiefs had orders yesterday to send men to build houses in the inner palace court for Mukasa and two other mighty wizards. They worked late, by moonlight.'

It was the Sunday before Christmas, and Mackay went up to the palace for his Sunday teaching sore at heart. He heard the people laughing scornfully as he passed. Very few of the chiefs were there; all had been busy late the night before, preparing for the witch.

A day or two later a royal page came to Mackay. 'Go up to court,' he said; 'go quickly.'

All the chiefs were seated there, even those said to be sick. They looked at Mackay with lowering glances. Beside the king sat an old woman, one of the princesses who were in league with lubare. It was an hour of the power of Satan.

Mackay was called forward and told to go to another part of the country to the council of the queen-mother, there to explain his reasons against devil-worship. He saw at once that this was a scheme to get him out of the way, that Mtesa might work wickedness in secret.

'I have finished my words,' he said quietly; 'I have no more to say. I will not explain at any other court than this. If you believe, good. If not, I cannot help it.'

'He had plenty of words yesterday,' leered the chiefs; 'and now to-day none!'

Mackay saw not a single friendly face.

Then Mtesa said amid great applause, 'We will go back to the religion of our fathers.' Turning to Mackay he continued: 'We don't want you now

to teach religion. We want you to make guns as many as the blades of grass, and gunpowder and bullets.'

'Shall we stay or go?' asked Mackay.

'Stay and work for me,' said Mtesa.

'I do work for you all,' said Mackay, stretching out his hands blackened at the forge; 'but I came to teach. If you wish it, I will teach only the poor, and leave you great men alone.' The chiefs had no intention of letting the common folk learn more than they knew themselves, but they did not want to lose their useful workman, and after hours of talk Mackay went home, not actually forbidden to go on teaching. 'I do not feel discouraged,' he said; 'only disappointed for the time. No power can stand against that of the cross of Christ.'

So he turned to his printing and his boy pupils at the mission house, working on quietly though on very short rations, for Mtesa was sending no royal gifts, and the witch had forbidden canoes to cross the lake to fetch the white man's stores.

On Christmas Eve, before the dawn, Mackay heard the noise of a great mob with African music. He stood at the door of his hut, and through the grey morning mist there floated up the booming of drums, the sound of horns and reed-fifes, with the shriller cries of women. A great procession was passing up the highway to the palace. Mukasa, the witch, was going to the king.

Only a few chiefs were admitted to the palace that Christmas, but all the medicine men and witches came to court, and all day long there was dancing and the chanting of wizard songs, while native beer was passed around till every man in the great hall was dead drunk. Only Mtesa sat almost silent, trying to quiet his bad conscience by gazing at the strange rhythmic movements of the dance. Mukasa foamed at the mouth and prophesied before the king that his land would be plunged into war because he had received the white men. Then she worked spells, and for her pains received large gifts of cattle, slaves, and women.

But she did not cure Mtesa.

Mackay would not go near the court while Mtesa openly honoured evil spirits. He himself had a very different visitor, also named Mukasa, one of the boy pages from the palace, a chief's son and a boy of noble bearing. Unlike most visitors Mukasa did not come to beg for presents, but always brought a handful of sweet guavas to give to his white friends, who called him 'the guava boy.' He and Mackay were busy together translating the Gospel into Luganda.

From henceforth the missionaries were often neglected and half-starved by the king, but they lived more and more for their boy friends, and before another Christmas came, one of Mackay's pupils, though only a slave-boy, had done a great deed.

With a pointed piece of grass for pen, and some ink made of soot and banana juice, Sembera wrote a note to his teacher. He came up to the mission house and thrust it quietly into Mackay's hand. The letter said:—

> 'Bwana Mackay, Sembera has come with compliments and to give you great news. Will you baptize him, because he believes the words of Jesus Christ?'

This happened on 8 October, 1881.

With Mtesa it was very different. The poor king had at last taken his stand, but on the wrong side; and he knew it. Though he still loved to talk and argue with Mackay, he was only playing with truth. Urged on by the Arab slave-traders he would sometimes 'give out an army.' Then the war-drums of cow-hide with the hair outside would boom, and the chiefs and their followers dressed in the skins of wild animals would work themselves into a state of hideous fury as they started out on a gigantic raid to rob and plunder, murder and catch slaves among the hapless village folk.

'Mtesa is the greatest slave-hunter in the world,' said Mackay.

One day he saw a straggling procession of two hundred women staggering up the hill to the capital. Their captors had not fed them for days. The little babes were tied by their arms round the necks of their mothers who were too weak to carry them.

'This is Mtesa's share of plunder from chief Sekibobo,' said a passer-by. 'There were five hundred at first, but the others died by the way.'

Sometimes at the tyrant's orders executioners would lie in wait in the swamps on the road to the capital, catching the peasants as they came in with their bananas, and dragging them to the execution yard. Mackay bending over his printing-press would hear a drum boom out at night across the valley, and then he knew that the prisoners had been fastened in forked sticks until the dawn, when they would all be slaughtered. Sometimes a sharp cry, followed by a hideous laugh, would ring out on the road beyond Mackay's fence. Then one of the boys would look up and say: 'Do you hear? They have caught some fellow and cut his throat.'

Sembera the slave-boy was happier in those days than the miserable king whose people called him 'Mukabya' (causer of tears).

CHAPTER IX

BOYS AND A BOAT

'MACKAY is mad!' said Mtesa.

'Mackay is mad!' echoed the servile chiefs who sat around the king.

Two Arabs looked on well content; then, with cunning and hatred in their faces, they told once again the story they had invented about Mackay the enemy of their slave-trade, the man who never minced matters but rebuked Mtesa boldly for his hideous raids. Bland and smiling to Mackay's face, in his absence they tried to work his ruin.

'This man is a noted murderer in the country of the English,' they told Mtesa. 'He fled here from the English Queen's soldiers who would have punished him with death. A revolver in each hand, this son of murder fled on to a steamer. He threatened the captain, saying, "I slay you at once unless you carry me to Zanzibar." In Zanzibar this Mackay rushed about like a maniac, shedding more blood; on the way up to the lake he murdered as he went. He is a danger to your country, this madman who only lives to kill. Why do you let him stay here? Only yesterday he bent the knee to Ismail and myself, imploring us not to tell your majesty of his crimes.'

The chiefs whose evil ways had been rebuked by Mackay were delighted with this wonderful tale, and Mtesa professed to believe it, though in his heart of hearts he knew that Mackay was one of the few true men of God that he had ever met. But he was too shrewd a man to drive away the only workman who could mend anything from a clock to a flagstaff.

Mackay did not trouble very much about his disgrace at court, though he was sometimes so short of food that he took the glass from the lanterns and picture-frames and silvered it to make looking-glasses for sale. He was busy with a thousand tasks at the mission. The rain was coming through the Baganda huts in which the white men were housed, and Mackay set to work to make a better mission house. A house of brick he dared not build, for the Arab slave-traders warned the king that missionaries would certainly build forts of brick from which to rule the land. But Mackay noticed that white ants, which seemed to devour every other kind of wood, left the wild palm alone, and of that wood he made a strong framework on which to build a stout wattle-and-daub cottage with steep-pitched roof of tiger-grass thatch.

The cottage had a flat ceiling, strongly built of beams and clay, and the space between that and the roof made an upstairs room reached by an outside staircase. Never before had there been a two-storied house in Uganda, and chiefs and pages,

peasants and slaves came thronging up the hill to gaze at the wonderful building.

'Wow! wow! wow!' they said as words of admiration failed them when they saw the windows, the staircase and baluster, the oven and the doors that swung on hinges.

'Wow, wow, wow! These white men of God are wise and good. Our men of lubare are filthy and greedy, who always tell us, "Give us, give us."'

When the house was finished Mackay left it to his fellow missionary, and for himself he patched up one of the old straw huts. 'A very small place will do for my private wants,' he said, 'for I have no furniture, but I have to combine in one medical dispensary, printing-office, tool store, barn, and schoolroom. Besides this, about a dozen boys always sleep in my house.'

The boys who crowded the mission house were the hope of Mackay's life. Some were young nobles, pages from the court in long white robes, with necklets of bent cane as badges of office. Others were freed slave-boys rescued by the missionaries, and some were slave-boys still, who slipped away to the mission house whenever they could be spared, or who were sent to learn to read that they might teach their masters. But they were all boys, and they all liked to be near Mackay, with his clear laugh, his straight, strong teaching, and his skilful hands.

Nobles and slaves alike, he set them all to work,

for he knew that boys with sluggish soft bodies could not serve Christ well. 'Come along and dig with me,' he would say, leading the way to the garden patch where he had planted a hundred large-leafed banana-trees, as well as lettuces and turnips, maize and sweet potatoes. 'Come and dig if you want any dinner.' Perhaps the son of some great chief would answer that tilling the soil should be left to slaves or women, but Mackay only laughed at the sleek, lazy youngster. 'God has given you two hands and only one stomach; you should work twice as much as you eat,' he said.

With Mackay for teacher the boys took only two months to learn to read, although when they came to him they might not know the meaning of even one of the queer black signs on the paper.

Not many months after Mtesa and the court had dubbed Mackay a madman, five of these boys stood out and publicly took service under Christ in Holy Baptism, the first of a great nation to fight under His banner. No wonder Mackay cared little for the foolish tongues at court.

Sembera, the slave-boy who had written the note to Mackay, was one of the five who stood out on that spring day in 1882. He had come for reading lessons that he might teach his master, but he had not learnt without risk. Mtesa heard some story that the white men gave presents of cloth to the readers, and his jealousy was roused; all the presents

in the land should come to his important self, he thought. He ordered his executioners to kill the boys.

They found Sembera in the road, but he was carrying a stout stick, with which he beat them off, and fled. Next day, as he and his master went up with bundles of tiger-grass to help to thatch the mission house, they found the bodies of four boy-readers lying in the road. After that Sembera came by night to get his lesson. He carried a book hidden in the folds of his brown bark-cloth robe, and in odd moments he would teach himself. Some old torn envelopes were priceless treasures; on those he learned to write, carefully copying the letters from a book. Sembera was devoted to Mackay, and on his baptism day he asked to take his teacher's name, and became Sembera Mackay.

The other boys were Mukasa Edwardo, afterwards a great chief, Mukasa Filipo, the 'guava boy' who so often helped Mackay with his translation, Henry Raiti ('Wright'), and Yakobo. More boys were learning fast, among them the young chief, Gabunga, admiral of the canoes.

Two months after that first baptism day a tremendous blowing-off of gunpowder from some long canoes on the lake announced that some one of importance was arriving in Uganda. The travellers were two Arab traders and a new English missionary. Mackay went down to the port with a fine Muscat

donkey for his new comrade to ride, and there he met a man who was to be his friend in many an adventure. 'Ashe reminds me of John Smith,' said Mackay, and he could not find higher praise for a new friend. We know from Mr. Ashe what he thought of the slight, spare man who came down to meet him that day. He says :—

> 'Mackay . . . was one of those few who look fearlessly forth, and seem to see the face of the living God. He never despaired of any person or anything. Quiet he was, and strong, and patient, and resolute, and brave; one on whom you might depend.'

Mr. Ashe told Mackay that friends in Brighton had bought and sent out a fair-sized boat, the *Eleanor*, to carry the mission stores. This was good news indeed, for the little *Daisy* was past work, and Mtesa was not always ready to supply canoes. Mackay determined to leave his two comrades, Ashe and O'Flaherty,[1] and travel to the south end of the lake, where the planks of the new boat were lying under a tarpaulin. Mtesa readily gave his leave, in the hope that when Mackay had built the *Eleanor* she would bring back many presents for his greedy majesty.

[1] Mr. Wilson had returned to England. Mr. O'Flaherty, an Irishman who reached Uganda in March, 1881, was Mackay's comrade when Mr. Ashe arrived in May, 1883. Mr. O'Flaherty was brilliantly clever at languages, and helped Mackay much in picking up Luganda, besides teaching him to read the Old Testament in Hebrew in the evenings.

Saying good-bye to his boys and his printing-press, and taking letters for England sewn up in a water-tight parcel of raw hide, Mackay made a coasting journey down the lake in an African canoe. On those lovely shores he sometimes saw bushes that seemed a mass of vivid yellow flowers, until the golden petals rose into the air, a cloud of yellow butterflies.

Solemn whale-headed storks, their enormous bills and great saucer-shaped pale yellow eyes far too large for their grey bodies, stood in silent rows, like grotesque statues. Or Mackay would see a tree that seemed covered with old rags. As he drew near he would smile to see that the diver birds of the lake had hung themselves out to dry, the wet and draggled feathers of their outspread wings all fluttering in the breeze.

Mackay saw the cruel power of the lake-side crocodiles whose terrible jaws snapped together like the falling of a heavy box-lid. Before landing for the night the canoe-men always probed the bottom with sticks or paddles, for fear one of these monsters should be lurking for them in the shallows. When he slides into the water like a giant lizard, the sun catching the green light on his scales, a crocodile looks almost beautiful. He looks his very worst when, after dining heavily off some cow that was unwary when her peasant master drove her down to drink, he lies in the sun and sleeps with a silly

smile, as though his dreams were all of foolishness and greed.

But for Mackay there were sights more terrible than the crocodiles. His heart was sick within him as he saw canoes heavily laden with chained slaves. Those boat-loads meant nothing to the crew of his canoe, but they, too, shuddered as they spoke of sea-monsters in the uncharted central depths of that great lake. They feared the spirits that ruled the deep, and they thought Mackay's compass, which guided them even on misty days, was a magical charm or a god. Only Mackay's friend, Sembera, as he sat with his master in the prow of the canoe reading with him from their New Testament, could share in the hope that Christ would one day reign over all the peoples of the mighty lake.

Mackay found the planks of the new boat lying on the shore of Smith Sound, a long creek of the lake, but the water here was so thick with reeds that even if he built the *Eleanor* he could not launch her through that matted wall of green. He examined the shore until he found an opening made by hippos at the head of the creek. 'That would make a little port for C.M.S. *Eleanor*,' he said, and set off to ask the king of Urima for leave to build his boat there.

The king was in hiding.

'I have heard of these white men,' he said. 'They steal a man's face and take it down to the coast for

every one to laugh at.' Some tale of photography must have reached the shy, proud king. He did not know that Mackay had far too much respect for any man, black or white, to treat him as a laughing-stock; but he sent the white man leave to stay one month and build his boat.

Mackay pitched his tent and set to work to fight the million mosquitoes that rose from the reeds in the creek. It was a lonely spot, and at night he was sometimes kept awake by the roaring of lions, but the *Eleanor* grew fast under his hand. He stuck his large hammer into the ground and made it his anvil, where he forged the bolts for her keel joints.

At last, after taking a coat of paint made with the oil squeezed from ground-nuts, the *Eleanor* rode out on the waters of Smith Sound, an open boat, smaller than a Scottish herring-boat, but of stouter build than the *Daisy*.

When Mackay launched her on the lake he added an African name to that chosen by the friends who sent her from England. He wanted her name to be understood in Uganda, so henceforth she was *Mirembe* ('Peace') as well as *Eleanor*.

The C.M.S. *Eleanor* sailed north with a very raw crew and a very precious cargo. Mackay loaded her with the parts of a larger and better printing-press than the baby machine with which he had worked so far. His crew, he said, was 'three men, four boys, a woman, and a monkey,' but as none

of them knew how to steer or to set a sail there was very little sleep for the skipper until he had made Entebbe port and landed his cargo on the shore of Uganda.

That was the first of many a voyage with the C.M.S. *Eleanor,* and the old witch Mukasa must have trembled with rage when she heard that Mackay and a crew of Christian boys were rowing on her sacred waters, not frightened by her spells and magic, but singing as they pulled their oars :

Tetulina ntisa
Tulina esanyu nyo.

(We have no terror ;
We have joy exceeding.)

Was it really such a great victory that the pack of witches and wizards had gained at the palace ?

But a fiercer and more cruel fight with the powers of evil was before Mackay and his boys.

CHAPTER X

HOW THE NEW REIGN BEGAN

One autumn day in 1884 Mackay pitched a tent on the shore at Entebbe, the port of Uganda, and beached his sturdy *Eleanor* for re-fitting and repairs, when a frightened messenger came down from the capital.

'My friend,' he said (for so they always called Mackay), 'the fire is out, the king has gone.'

The king had indeed gone from his palace on the hill, for he was dead, but the rule of the land forbade any man to use that word of a king. 'The fire is out,' they said instead, and it was true; for the ever-burning fire at the gate-house of the palace was extinguished when the king died, and the gate-keeper was put to death.

Mackay looked at the messenger who had girt himself with withered banana-fibre in sign of mourning, and he knew there was reason for the terror in the man's voice and eye. He had heard that in Uganda, when the king died, and the death-wail went up from the palace, all law was at an end, and the strong plundered and murdered the weak until the great chiefs had chosen a new king. The white men's house would certainly be looted, the messenger

said, and the white men up at the capital would probably be killed. Already two messengers of Mackay had been attacked and robbed of their clothes, and forced to run for their lives.

When he heard the news Mackay set to work at double speed upon the *Eleanor*—patched her up hastily, launched her and made her fast near the shore. Then he loaded her with provisions for a voyage. He wanted her ready for instant flight if O'Flaherty and Ashe should escape from the capital to the lake.

There was no sleep for Mackay in his tent that night; he was waiting for the footsteps and voices of his comrades; but the white dawn crept over the water and he was still alone. He wondered what part God would give him to play in the anxious days when the country had no king.

He had not long to wait, for the heavy tread of marching men came down towards the beach, and Mackay saw a hundred soldiers, men from the palace itself.

'The Katikiro (Prime Minister) has sent for you,' they said. 'You are wanted to come and make the coffin for the king. We will guard you and see that you reach the palace safely.'

Mackay and his escort marched fast that day, but night had fallen before they reached the capital, and they could not enter the town till daybreak, for the nerves of every official were quivering, and had they

heard the marching of armed men at night the chiefs would have called their followers to fall upon Mackay as one who had come to steal the throne.

In the morning, when he walked quietly into the palace, Mackay found the courtyard filled with hastily built huts, put up for the chiefs who came from every corner of the land to sit in the great council, and to hear which of Mtesa's sons the four highest officials of the kingdom would choose to reign after his father.

'We are all waiting for you,' they told Mackay. 'Until the body of Mtesa is buried no new king can be proclaimed, and who knows what evil deeds may not be done in the land?'

Already, in the house of Mtesa's favourite wife, they were digging a great pit that was to be his grave; but the workmen of Uganda could not satisfy the chiefs when they tried to make a royal coffin.

'Will you show them how?' said the chiefs, turning, as usual, to Mackay who always helped them. 'For a king's funeral we want not only a wooden coffin, but an inner case of metal, and it must be very, very large; it is for a king of Uganda.'

Mackay went across the valley to the mission house for his tools, and found Ashe and O'Flaherty safe, though living in the midst of wild rumours. He little knew how much his own quiet strong goodness and his brave teaching of the way of God was

holding the chiefs from cruelty and crime. Back he went to the palace with all his tools and with sheets of zinc that had lined the packing-cases that came out from England.

A royal coffin should be enormous, all the chiefs agreed on that, and Mackay did not find it difficult to make a great chest of wood ; but it was a harder matter to manage the metal lining. Except for the iron heads of their hoes and spear points the Baganda made no metal goods, but bought from Arab traders. Mackay called for brass and copper trays, and when the chiefs brought these he set men to hammer them out flat. Then with his own hands he riveted the flattened trays and his sheets of zinc to the inside of the wooden coffin till it was metal-lined.

'He cuts metal like thread,' said the Baganda smiths who watched his work.

'Now bring me calico,' said Mackay, and they laid before him yards of the fine white material of which Mtesa's robe had always been made. With this Mackay covered his coffin. Then he told the chiefs that his work was done.

Mtesa was buried, and a chief was set to guard his tomb. Then all Uganda waited breathlessly till the council of chiefs should proclaim the new king.

At last a shout went up from the palace : 'Mwanga has eaten Uganda ! '

This Mwanga, for whom the chiefs were shouting themselves hoarse, was a boy with great dark eyes

and a rather silly laugh, who had often been to the mission house. He gazed around eagerly at all the sights there, but never attended steadily enough to master the alphabet. Mwanga was only eighteen, and his hand and his head were not strong enough to use the great power of the king of all Uganda.

At Mackay's first visit to Mwanga as king, he found the dark-eyed boy determined to show his own importance. Mwanga wore a fine leopard skin, the royal mantle of Uganda, and held a mirror in his hand. His high-set eyebrows twitched as he received Mackay's present haughtily and tried to show his new greatness by bullying his white teacher. Mackay was explaining that he wished to take the *Eleanor* down to the south of the lake to send off mails for England.

'I will give you a messenger to go with you,' said Mwanga; 'Kadu Mayanja shall go.'

He knew very well that Mackay would not wish to travel with this fellow, who was a thorough scamp and a murderer. Mackay was perfectly polite and firm.

'If Mayanja is such a clever messenger, he can go by himself in my boat,' he said; 'I will stay behind.'

Mwanga gave in when he had bluffed a little, and sent a Christian page to travel with Mackay.

The real ruler of the land in those days was not the boy who sat on the stool of state and pleased himself

by ordering slaves about, but the crafty Katikiro who had climbed to his great estate from that of a palace cook and knew how to flatter kings.

This man, a small fellow with a clever face and a swift-moving brain, talked with oily politeness to the missionaries, but he was no true friend of theirs, for he feared their power over the king. They were soon to learn how much his fair speeches meant.

Taking the mails for Europe, Mackay started down to the lake, Ashe walking with him, and a party of their boys ahead. They noticed armed figures hastening past them amid the towering mpafu trees, or slinking under the brilliant green of the great banana leaves.

'Where are you hurrying with your shield and spear?' asked Mackay of one fellow as he passed.

The man hesitated a moment, then he said: 'To catch some of Mwanga's women who have run away,' and with that he hastened on.

The lake lay only just beyond a tangled belt of wood, rich in great feathery ferns, when the missionaries found their path barred by a wild figure. Dressed in the shabbiest and dirtiest of European clothes, the man looked more like some dweller in a tramps' lodging-house than a chief of the kingdom of Uganda. But a chief he was, and one whom the Arabs had taught to serve the prophet Mohammed and to hate the missionaries of Christ. There he

stood brandishing a long sword, while behind him the path through the wood was blocked with waiting soldiers.

'Go back! Go back!' they cried.

'We are the king's friends,' said Mackay and Ashe. 'How dare you insult the king's guests? The king has given us leave to travel.' And they made as if they would go on.

'You lie!' shouted Mujasi, and called to his soldiers, who rushed forward and snatched away the white men's sticks; then with yells, as though they were capturing an army of foes, they seized the unresisting men and their handful of boys. Hustling and pushing their captives, they marched them back towards the capital.

After eight miles or so a halt was called, and for the first time Mackay and Ashe saw that the hands of their boys were bound. Under all those threatening weapons they were powerless to help, but their hearts sank when, at a fork in the road, the soldiers marched the helpless boys towards the king's enclosure, and roughly pushed Mackay and Ashe up the other path, bidding them go free to the mission house.

Mackay and Ashe sat down to think. After nearly six hours of marching in the heat they could not rest, for fear their boys should suffer. Deciding to go straight to the man who held most real power, they hurried to the Katikiro's house.

'You must wait,' said the pages in his courtyard.

It was ill work waiting while their boys might be suffering every sort of cruelty. The loafers in the courtyard were all talking of the seizing of the white men, and as they listened to the gossip around them Mackay and Ashe discovered that the very chief who captured them was even now closeted with the Katikiro. Was the fair-spoken Katikiro in league with the chief who haled them back? Mackay could wait no longer. Moving forward to the great man's doorway he called aloud: 'Katikiro, my friend, I am your friend. We are the white men.'

Something in his dauntless ways made men yield to Mackay, and he and Ashe were allowed to enter the hall. Mujasi, the chief who had seized them, sat at the Katikiro's side.

'Why have the king's friends, travelling by his leave, been rudely seized and carried back?' asked Mackay boldly.

The Katikiro, who had given none but fair words before, now showed his real nature. He took the side of Mujasi. 'Why did you threaten this chief with your gun?' he asked Mackay. No one in the room was deceived by this bluff, for the Katikiro and all men knew that Mackay travelled with a stick as his only weapon. But it was useless to speak; the Katikiro would listen to nothing that the white men had to say. He was working himself up into

a passion, and at last he roared out with fiery eyes :—

'Take the Bazungu (Europeans) and send them away. Let them return no more.'

Mujasi, the hero of the hour, arose with all his men, and snatching up long reeds for spears they danced a war dance. Mackay and Ashe were seized by a mob of soldiers and dragged from the house by a crowd who clutched their clothes and screamed wildly, 'Mine shall be his coat!' 'Mine his trousers!' When a chief in Uganda was deposed it was the custom for the mob to strip him of his garments.

Suddenly the chief executioner gave a quiet order, the mob that would have torn the two white men to pieces melted away, and Mackay and Ashe found themselves left alone outside the great man's courtyard.

Hurrying back to the mission house they ordered all their friends and pupils to go off without delay, and hide in safer quarters. The sound of excited voices in the capital reached the mission house like the humming of an angry swarm of bees. Alone in their quiet room on the hill-top the three missionaries prayed that God's work in Uganda might not be stopped. Then turning to their stores they took out thirteen bales of cloth, hoping with these to win mercy for their boys.

Six bales they sent up to Mwanga in the palace, asking him to free the boys.

The messenger came back. 'It is late,' he said, 'the king will receive your gift to-morrow.'

One bale was sent to Mujasi, the rascal chief, and six went to the Katikiro with an appeal for justice. A messenger came back to say that the great man accepted the gift and the white men were 'his brothers,' but not a word had this treacherous 'brother' to say of the fate of the captured boys.

At midnight soft footsteps drew near to the mission house. Two Christians from the palace of Mwanga had crept down to tell the missionaries that through all danger and disgrace they would be true brothers to the white men who had taught them to know the Christ.

CHAPTER XI

KNIFE AND FIRE

NEXT day a weary boyish figure staggered up to Mackay's house. Sambo, his servant boy, one of the prisoners, had been set free and hurried to the white men with terrible news.

The boys had spent the night together in prison in the palace, and Kakumba, the eldest of them, a plucky fellow of fifteen who had often come to visit the missionaries when no one else would dare, had been severely beaten. In the morning their captors told them that Mujasi meant to burn them all to death. A chief had pleaded for Sambo, and he alone was free.

Mackay and the others heard the news with a shudder. The full horror of their powerlessness came over them. They would have done or suffered anything to save their boys; to be helpless was almost more than those strong men could bear. They had to go away alone and seek courage as they looked into the face of God.

That afternoon was spent in sending messenger after messenger to chief or palace with appeals for justice, or offers of such little wealth as the missionaries possessed in ransom for the prisoners.

When night fell, two more trembling boys crept into the mission house. Bikutula and Balibanange had been redeemed by some sub-chiefs with the missionaries' money; but for the three remaining boys all ransom had been refused.

The two ransomed boys told the story, that night, of a mock trial before the king, in which Mujasi, with devilish hatred in his eyes, played the part of chief accuser. Their crime was their close friendship with the white men.

The crafty Katikiro and the blustering Mujasi told the king that Mackay and his comrades had hosts of boys at the mission house, whom they taught to obey another King, one Jesus.

'And that Mackay,' they said, 'is always stealing Baganda boys out of the country in his boat, and coming back with armies of white men whom he hides about your land. Soon Mwanga will be king no longer; white men will eat the country.'

They knew how to bend Mwanga to their will, and since they wished to burn the boys to death he let them have their wicked way. He was but a puppet.

Little by little Mackay learnt the full story of that afternoon's work.

Mujasi and his soldiers, some carrying bundles of firewood on their heads, followed by a mocking crowd with bowls of native beer, marched the three boys outside the capital, as once rough soldiers and

a howling mob had led another Prisoner outside the city wall of old Jerusalem. A woman captive too was in that little band; a Christian named Sara, ill and unfit to walk, but not too weak for Mujasi's cruel hatred. She carried her little child.

As they marched, Mujasi played the mocker. 'You know Jesus Christ,' he said to the boys with a sneer; 'you believe you will rise again. Well, I will burn you and see if it is true.'

We are told that the boys replied with a snatch of a Christian hymn that had often been their marching or rowing song on happy journeys with Mackay or Ashe.

The procession reached a swamp, a quiet place of reeds and chirping crickets, edged with banana trees whose great cool leaves stood out against the sky.

Here the soldiers made a rough wooden framework, about six feet high, under which they piled their firewood. Then, brandishing European swords, they seized the boys to hack off their arms that they might not struggle in the fire.

Seruwanga suffered without a word or a cry. Kakumba, who had been baptized only two years before on Christmas Day, made one last appeal to Mujasi.

'You believe in Allah the merciful,' he said; 'show mercy!'

But Mujasi's face was hideous in its lust for blood. He only taunted the boy as he suffered. 'Now read your book!' he cried.

Lugalama, the third of the boys, was a child of eleven years, best and brightest little pupil of the white men. 'Oh, do not cut off my arms,' he begged. 'I will not struggle, I will not fight. Only throw me into the fire.'

But the butchers carried out their task.

The three boys travelled the short road of agony, the royal road trodden by Christ their King. Who knows that His face was not with them all the time? It is said that from the midst of the fire a boy's voice was heard singing:—

> Daily, daily sing to Jesus;
> Sing, my soul, His praises due.

All the details of that hideous scene we shall never know, but there was something in the noble bearing of the boys that brought one of the very executioners to Mackay, begging that he too might learn how to pray.

Mujasi had no more victories, for a message came from Mwanga that he wanted the woman Sara for himself. She escaped the fire, but was marched back to the palace with her baby to spend the night in the stocks.

The frightful thirst for blood had seized Mujasi. Turning round, he saw one of his servants, Kidza,

his chief guide or scout, whom he suspected of following Christ.

'Ah, you are here!' he blustered; 'I will burn you, too, and your household. I know you are a follower of Jesus.'

'Yes, I am,' said Kidza quietly, 'and I am not ashamed of it.'

Mujasi turned away: hack and burn as he would, he could not defeat the spirit that looked out of Kidza's eyes.

That was the story of 30 January, 1885. Bit by bit it reached the mission house. 'Our hearts are breaking,' wrote Mackay. 'All our Christians dispersed. We are lonely and deserted, sad and sick.'

They were down with fever; and ever haunting their feverish thoughts was the vision of the boys they loved, and a jeering crowd, and curving tongues of flame. Only perhaps Mackay, who was older than his comrades, was more able to see, with the three children in the burning fiery furnace, the form of a fourth, like to the Son of man. Certainly his comrades leant on him in those evil days.

'I can hardly find words to say what Mackay was to me then,' wrote Ashe.

Sick at heart and sick in body, Ashe longed to go far away and be rid of it all.

'No,' said Mackay, 'there is work for you to do.' And he turned to the printing-press. Ashe knew

that Mackay for his great ability had been offered important posts in other parts of Africa. But his life was given to the kingdom by the great lake. 'Mackay would never on any terms have ceased to be a missionary of Jesus Christ,' wrote Ashe.

CHAPTER XII

MWANGA'S DOWNHILL ROAD

MUJASI's banana plantations lay round the mission garden, and his spies were set to watch all comings and goings. 'Tell me the name of every one who comes to learn,' he said; 'I will roast alive every person who becomes a Christian.' He caught a small boy who had often lingered watching the doings at the mission house, and flogged the child until in pain and terror he gave the names of many who were learning to read.

Yet in spite of Mujasi, Mackay was right; there was much work for the missionaries to do after the tragedy of the swamp. The Christians were very bold. Samwili, one of those first five boys to be baptized, came openly past Mujasi's sentries to see Mackay.

'I know I am on Mujasi's black list,' he said; 'where is the use of pretending I am not your friend?'

The Christians were not the only visitors: bare brown feet crept noiselessly up to the mission house by night, and lowered voices asked eagerly for a lesson. The teaching of Christ seemed more precious to the Baganda now that they knew they might have to

die for it. Gabunga, the young admiral of Mwanga's canoes, sent a messenger at midnight saying that he wished to be baptized, and arranging to meet the white men at a house a mile from the mission. Nua, a great good-natured giant, and the king's chief blacksmith, invited the missionaries to his house in the country and made no secret of his baptism. Nua's plantations became a frequent hiding-place for Christians whose lives were in danger.

Mackay was busy with plans for helping the Christians of Uganda to stand alone if their missionaries were killed or sent away.

'We must leave them something in print,' he said, 'so that they can go on with their services and teach the rest of the nation.'

He set up and pulled off some thousands of copies of morning and evening services and the service for Holy Baptism, as well as St. Matthew's Gospel. Then, with the help of the Baganda Christians, the missionaries chose out ten brave and strong men as leaders. In times of danger when the Christians could not all meet in one place on Sunday the leaders promised to hold little services in their own huts or gardens, to welcome and shelter the other Christians, and to teach those who wanted to learn.

One day a messenger came to Mackay from the Katikiro.

'My favourite rifle wants mending,' the great man said. 'Oh, Mackay, do you hate me?'

Hateful as his crime had been against the murdered boys, Mackay determined to show the Katikiro that the followers of Jesus do not hate their brother men, but only dastardly deeds. He went up to the Katikiro's house, which he had not entered since the man had played the traitor.

'Katikiro, my friend, the evil you have done us is a small affair,' said Mackay. 'The sin you have done against God is the serious thing. You have killed innocent boys.'

Then he mended the rifle and polished it carefully.

The Katikiro was amazed, but there lay the rifle with Mackay's good work in it,—these white men were friends worth having. He used his great power, and Mujasi's sentry vanished from the mission gate.

Mackay decided that he ought to see Mwanga. 'Visit that miserable murderer!' his comrades said. But Mackay thought of the kingdom over which that fickle boy was reigning, and decided never to give up trying to help the king.

'You are king,' he told Mwanga. 'You should excel us all in cleverness; let me therefore come and help you to read.'

Mwanga liked the sense of importance, and invited Mackay to come. He had all his gates and doors closed, and shut himself in with Mackay and his Bible. Mwanga sat beside Mackay, and listened to words that went straight as an arrow to the guilty secrets of his life.

'I cannot do as I like,' he said; 'the old chiefs thwart me.'

Then he gave Mackay a fat bullock and sent him away sorrowful, for he saw clearly that this young king was far from his own master. He did not yet know that the youth who sat by him with a weak, wistful face was slave to the smoking of an awful drug that turned him at times into a bloodthirsty madman.

Most of the pages and storekeepers of Mwanga's palace were pupils of the white men, and it was a good day for them when their teacher came again to see the king. Mackay, for his part, was amused and glad, as he walked through the courts and store-rooms, to see groups of boys sprawling on the rush-strewn floor, their heads close together as they spelt out their reading lessons from the books he had made for them. Each boy had made a little bark-cloth cover to protect the back of the book from greasy fingers.

The gleam of royal favour did not last for long. The young king Mwanga was but a tool in the hands of the subtle Katikiro, whose whisper was always in his ear.

'The white men mean to eat up your land,' he would tell the king. 'At present they come by ones and twos, openly to your front door (i. e. across the lake to the port of Entebbe), but they will send back word of the richness of your land, and soon great armies will follow them and fall upon you, entering

the country by the back door (i.e. overland from the north or north-east).'

That autumn it seemed to Mwanga as if these warnings were true. ' A very great white man with many followers is coming through Busoga to enter Uganda by the back door,' they told him.

All unaware of the king's dread of ' back-door visitors, the good and brave Bishop Hannington, on his way to help the missionaries in Uganda, had thought to shorten the journey by marching through Busoga. His ' multitude of followers ' was the long line of porters carrying luggage on their heads.

Frantic with fear, Mwanga called for his head door-keeper and one of his trusted pages, whom he sent off with secret orders. The door-keeper was to tell chief Luba that Hannington and all his porters must be caught and murdered in Busoga. ' Let not one escape,' said the king. The page was to bring back the booty from Hannington's caravan in secret to Mwanga's palace.

By that strange human telegraphy which carries news over all the forest paths of Africa, the heavy tidings reached the missionaries.

It was a Sunday morning in October when a boy friend from the court came in to tell Mackay :—

' A white man travelling to Uganda is taken prisoner in Busoga. They say that he is in the stocks. He is ill, he takes nothing but milk. He is a white man who has lost a thumb.'

That last detail told Mackay that the prisoner was none other than the Bishop who was on his way to help the lonely mission in Uganda.

The Christians were coming up the path to the mission station for their Sunday morning service, and Mackay and Ashe called together the ten who had been appointed leaders and told them the grave news of their Bishop. Then, after prayer with their Baganda friends, the two white men hurried to the palace.

Mwanga did not want to look into Mackay's face that morning; he began to play a coward's game. All that long Sunday he kept the white men waiting in his courtyard. Next morning, after a sleepless night, Mackay was so ill with fever that he could not stand; but Ashe went again to court with a letter for the king, begging to be told that the white man in Busoga was safe and free.

'Let Mackay come and write a letter to that new white man telling him to turn back again; he must not enter the country by the back door,' said Mwanga. Mackay's feverish fingers scrawled a note to Hannington, but it was only a part of Mwanga's cruel game. Already the executioner was far on his way to Busoga. That letter could not arrive in time.

For days Mwanga tried to keep back the story of the murder; but it was all in vain. Midnight visitors brought the news to the mission house. 'The executioner has returned from Busoga,' said

a boy friend one night; 'and with him the page who has brought the white man's goods. They came under cover of darkness, and the booty was smuggled into the palace to-night. Mwanga has dressed himself in the Bishop's robes.'

Gradually Mackay learnt the full story of the Bishop's death, and heard how, as he faced the spears, he said: 'Tell the king I have purchased the road to Uganda with my life. I die for the Baganda.'

One day a man brought a worn leather book to the mission; it was the murdered Bishop's little travelling Bible. Mr. Ashe was counting out the cowrie shells to buy it, when the Baganda Christians said, 'May we pay some of the money ourselves? It is our brother's book; we should like to share the cost of redeeming it.'

Mwanga saw that his guilty secret was out. 'Who gave the white men information?' he said, and turned in fury on his Christian pages. One who was a leader among them he ordered out to instant death, and while the lad was being bound for execution Mwanga mocked.

'This is the fellow who was always wanting to teach me, and told me to put away my charms,' he said, showing his white teeth in a cruel smile.

The madness of murder was fast falling upon Mwanga. The memory of past crimes and the

maddening drug that he smoked had roused in him a maniac thirst for blood. He stood with his soldiers over the workmen who had the planting of a new flagstaff in his palace court. 'If you once let that pole fall, we shoot you all,' he said, with a madman's chuckle.

Mackay knew well that it was but a matter of time before this king with the heart of a tiger fell upon the Christians whose nobler lives were a constant rebuke to him. The little band of good men and true who came together for their Holy Communion service on Easter Day of 1886 were in peril of their lives.

It was on May 23 that the king acted the first scene in the tragedy he was bringing on his land. Enraged because a newly-baptized page refused to sin at his bidding, Mwanga turned on a Christian boy named Apolo.

'Are you a reader?' he screamed in passion.

'I read, my lord.'

'Then I'll teach you to read,' and Mwanga gashed the boy with his spear, and beat him till he broke the wooden handle over his back.

That morning Mackay stepped on to the veranda where Ashe was holding a reading class. 'I have just heard that the king has gone mad and given orders to seize all the Christians,' he said in English. The pupils looked in wonder at the grave faces of the white men, and Mackay turned to them

telling them the news. 'Escape while you can,' he said.

Soon Mackay and Ashe [1] were left alone in their compound, while Mwanga, the poor wicked fool, set himself to harry and slay the most trusty of his subjects.

[1] O'Flaherty had left Uganda in 1885.

CHAPTER XIII

AT THE MERCY OF A MADMAN

The roads were watched by armed bands, and Christians or pupils of the white men were trapped and cut to pieces. Mackay hardly dared to smile at his friends when he met them out of doors, for fear a lurking spy should condemn them as belonging to the Christians.

At dead of night a Christian chieftain, old Isaya, came to see Mackay. Mwanga had deposed him and made a rascally one-eyed Arab chief of Munakulya in his stead; but to Isaya that was a small trouble. The old chief had come to tell Mackay that some of his Christian retainers were under sentence of death. 'They are going to kill my children, my children!' he said.

The chief and the missionary together asked God for the courage of clear faith in Him.

Mackay and Ashe turned to the printing-press and set up a message to be carried secretly over hill and swamp to the lonely huts and dense banana groves where the Christians were in hiding.

It was a small sheet of paper printed on both sides, and it said:—

'People of Jesus who are in Buganda. Our friends,—We, your friends and teachers, write to

you to send you words of cheer and comfort which we have taken from the Epistle of Peter the Apostle of Christ. In days of old, Christians were hated, were hunted, were driven out, and were persecuted for Jesus' sake; and thus it is to-day. . . .

'Farewell. We are the white men: we are your brethren indeed who have written to you.'

Turning to the other side of the paper, the Christians saw:

'Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you,' and the rest of the great words of courage and triumph which you can read for yourself in your New Testament (1 Peter iv. 12–19).

The mission house that had hummed with the voices of busy pupils was deserted and silent in those days, but once a troop of children came through the reed gateway to Mackay's house. Smallpox was ravaging Uganda, and a chief had sent the children to be vaccinated. They were too little to excite the suspicions of the executioners, and their leader Kiwobe (his name means 'Death-wail') was himself only a small boy. He handed the children over to Mackay and went off alone to speak to Mr. Ashe.

'My friend, I want to be baptized,' he said.

'Do you know what you are asking?'

But Kiwobe knew full well, for the executioners had come up the hill while he with some other boys was having a lesson from a Christian named Munyaga.

Kiwobe and the rest had escaped, but Munyaga disdained flight. He only asked for time to put on his white robe before he was led away to meet knife and fire.

'I know, my friend,' said Kiwobe.

'But you know if you say you are a Christian they will kill you.'

'I know, my friend.'

'But suppose people asked you if you were a reader, would you tell a lie, and deny it and say no?'

'I shall confess, my friend.'

Ashe went over to Mackay, at work amid his cluster of children, and the two men thought Kiwobe worthy to be counted a disciple of Christ. Then and there they held a baptismal service for two men and a boy. Kiwobe asked to be named Samuel.

After many deeds of blood Mwanga's fury spent itself in a great human bonfire, when he put to death some thirty of the best men of his kingdom. In his mad cruelty the king had at last made himself feared by chiefs and commoners. He now knew the loneliness of the tyrant who has many cringing flatterers and no outspoken friends.

Like a fire whose fierce burning is choked by its own ashes, Mwanga's rage died down; but it was smouldering still. The Christians dared not return from their hiding-places.

Mackay and Ashe decided that one of them must

go to England to win more missionaries and more care for Africa. 'Success is certain in the end,' said Mackay. 'This African problem *must be solved*, and in God's name it shall be solved, for God means it to be solved.'

Mwanga gave leave to Mr. Ashe to go. He would not spare Mackay, his man of all work. Ashe sailed away one evening, with the sunset lighting up the brown sails of his Arab dhow, and Mackay was left alone with the half-mad king, the hostile Arab traders, the scattered company of Christians, and the Lord Whom he trusted.

Perhaps he was never so daring as in those days when, quite alone, he went time after time to the palace to beg release for the Christians who still lay in prison. 'They must not be left to prison and the stake one moment longer than can be helped,' said Mackay.

'You promised me that if I showed your gunsmith how to make cartridge cases, you would give me anything I asked,' he reminded the king. 'Now keep your promise!'

'What do you want?'

'The lives of the readers whom you have thrown into prison and have not yet executed.'

'But they are all executed.'

'No, king, I know that some of them are still lying in prison. I am your friend; I am not your slave, but day after day I have been working to

make you a spinning jenny, and a loom to weave your cloth ; now grant me what I ask.'

Mwanga gave no general order of release, but gradually the executioners ceased to watch the roads at night, the Christians and the reading pupils crept back one by one, and with light from a tin of petroleum which Ashe had managed to send back to his comrade, Mackay held night-school every evening.

But the Arab slave-traders saw that the man they dreaded was alone. Day and night they worked on the king to drive Mackay from the country. On his visits to court they contradicted all he said, and stormed at him while Mwanga listened in silence.

Mackay held on, alone and often ill, for eleven months of brow-beating. At the end of that time Mwanga, persuaded by the Arabs, decided to send away his one true friend.

'I will not go,' said Mackay, 'unless the boat that takes me away brings back another missionary to take my place. And I will not go unless I may lock up the mission house and leave the garden and sheds in careful hands until the new missionary comes.'

The Arabs ground their teeth. They had hoped for the spoils of the mission when they had driven Mackay away.

'Who is the white man who will come and take your place?' said Mwanga doubtfully. Mackay

told him the names of the little band of missionaries whom the C.M.S. had planted at the south end of the lake. One of them was the Rev. E. C. Gordon.

'Gordon!—is one of them called Gordon?' said Mwanga; 'that is the one I will have; send Gordon.' The king had often heard the name of General Gordon, and knew that he was good and great.

Mackay went to the mission house to pack his goods, but very slowly he worked. All day long and through the night almost till morning his house was crowded with Baganda friends who could hardly believe that the man they had leant on for ten long years was going. 'You are leaving us orphans,' they said. He sold them his last copies of St. Matthew's Gospel, which he had translated and printed for them with his own hands, and he told them that Mr. Gordon would soon come to be their friend and teacher, and he hoped to come back to them some day.

Some of his Christians were still in prison or in hiding. To them he sent farewell presents of cloth bought with some money which Christians in India had given on Christmas Day as a gift to their hunted brothers, the Christians of Uganda.

At the very last a royal messenger ran up with a brass ornament for Mackay's neck, and copper and brass spears and shields, a gift of honour for the man who had fought a good fight in Uganda.

'These are the king's gifts,' said the messenger. 'He says, "Return very soon; if you go only to the south of the lake, you can get back to us in three months' time."'

So Mwanga the mad king let his best friend sail away in the *Eleanor* over the moonlit lake.

CHAPTER XIV

'HOLDFAST IS A GOOD DOG'

On a sunburnt hill-side, where the grass was bleached in the fierce light, Mackay pitched his tent. Here, on the land of a friendly chief, the new little C.M.S. station of Usambiro was to be planted. It lay six miles from that tiny port at the south end of Smith Sound, where he had once built the *Eleanor*. It was a desert spot: the parched hill-side, all strewn with boulders, swept away down to the lake, two miles below, where the eye rested gratefully on the good green of the fringe of papyrus reeds.

'I am at home anywhere on the shore of my beloved Nyanza,' said Mackay cheerily, and set himself to the pioneer work of the new station.

Behind, on the rocky hill-top, and all along the lake shore were tiny villages, each with a strong stockade against leopards or human foes. As usual the village children loved to cluster round Mackay while he worked. 'I do enjoy having black children about me every day,' he said.

But his eye often travelled over the water northwards as he thought of his friends in Uganda, and of Mr. Gordon his comrade holding on there alone. Then he would turn to the printing-press which he

THE MISSION COMPOUND AT USAMBIRO

From Stanley's 'In Darkest Africa', by permission

had brought south with him, and strike off spelling-lessons or a few sheets of the Gospel for the pupils whom he loved. Whenever a canoe or caravan travelled towards Uganda, Mackay had a bale of books and papers ready to send to his friends.

Day by day he was expecting a long train of porters from the coast, with his comrade Mr. Ashe, who was coming back to Africa with a new leader for the mission, Bishop Parker. Mackay toiled to make a shelter ready for the new-comers, dragging timber over long distances, putting up huts and tool-sheds, and building a long, low, solid house with a baked mud roof.

The caravan arrived in pouring rain in time for Christmas, 1887. Little cared Mackay for the tropical rain that soaked his new mud roof and dripped through every cranny in the huts, so glorious was it to spend his Christmas with five other white men, and to think and plan with them for a better and stronger mission than ever before.

Spring came, and one member of the little party, Mr. Blackburn, fell ill and died, weakened by the bad food and water of his long journey from the coast.

Then, one Sunday night in March, Mackay, who slept in the next little room to Bishop Parker, whom he had quickly learned to love, heard stir and movement and the voice of the Bishop's African boy next door.

Hurrying in, he found the Bishop shivering in

the cold fit of an African fever. Quick as thought Mackay, always a most ready and tender nurse to his comrades, was piling more blankets round the shivering form, and heating water to warm his patient's feet.

Next day Mackay and Ashe and Walker saw that the fever held the sick man in its grip. His mind was wandering, and he talked and moved excitedly. In turns they sat beside him all day long until, exhausted, he fell at night into a weary, restless sleep. A great storm of wind and thunder was rolling over the lake that night, when Mackay and Ashe by the bedside saw that the Bishop breathed no longer.

In the wildness of the night the men of the mission dug a grave on the hill-side. Mackay took some beautiful brown bark-cloth made by his Baganda friends, and wrapped in it the body of the second bishop who had died on the way to Uganda. The storm died down, and at half-past four, in the darkness of the very early morning, they buried the body of their leader, Mackay reading the funeral service, because he alone could read it so that the African boys and porters understood. As they turned away from the grave a streak of crimson and gold lighted up the sky, and all the birds began their morning twitterings.

Mackay always believed that God's morning was breaking over Africa, and he sat down and wrote to the Church Missionary Society to press on boldly

with the mission and to send more men without delay—a bishop and twelve men, he asked for, to be planted at once in important posts.

A few months later Mackay was left once more alone at Usambiro. Mr. Ashe had to go back to England, a sick man.

'I look for new companions by and by,' Mackay said in his loneliness; 'and I know that they will come.' Eagerly he watched for his mail from England.

When it arrived, instead of news of reinforcements on the way, he read of people in England, who, hearing of the Bishop's death, had said, 'The Nyanza Mission has nothing but troubles, and it costs a great deal of money; it would be wiser to give up the mission on the great lake and stick to our work nearer the coast.'

It was enough to break a brave man's heart. He wrote home in burning words :—

> 'What of this suggestion, whispered or uttered aloud, to give up the Nyanza Mission? Are you, perhaps, joking when you mention such a thing? . . . I only answer NEVER! . . . Tell me, ye faint hearts, who are they to whom ye mean to give up the Nyanza Mission? . . . Is it to murderous raiders like Mwanga, or to slave-traders from Zanzibar, or to English and Belgian dealers in rifles and gunpowder, or to German spirit-sellers? All these are in the field, and *they* make no talk of giving up their respective missions. . . . Where the darkness is the darkest,—there it is the loudest

call comes to the Church of Christ to dare and do, and to hoist the colours of the Captain Who never lost a fight.'

Strange rumours began to reach Mackay from Uganda, and one day two of the palace pages came up the sunny hill-side to his mission house. 'We come from Mwanga,' they said; 'he is not in Uganda, he is at Magu.'

They sat down and told Mackay their story. Mwanga had set off from his palace one morning to carry out a fiendish plot. He meant to murder all the Christian and Mohammedan readers of his palace by leaving them to starve on a desert island in the lake. He had started off in good spirits attended by his pages, but on the beach the victims, many of them the picked men of his bodyguard, had quietly refused to enter the canoes unless he also came. Mwanga looked at the stern set faces all round him and knew that his secret was out. He turned on his heel, and calling to his pages was carried quickly to the palace.

'They have rebelled,' he said to the Katikiro.

Next day a cry went through the palace: 'Troops are at the gate.'

Mwanga fled to the lake with his pages and women, and the Christians and Mohammedans proclaimed his brother, Kiwewa, king in his stead.

With one fisherman to steer, Mwanga made good his escape in a canoe, paddled by himself and his

frightened pages. At length he had reached the Arab settlement of Magu at the south-east corner of the lake, where he was little better than a prisoner, the Arabs claiming his few rifles in payment for the food they gave him. In his trouble he turned to Mackay; the man he had bullied and robbed and deceived seemed to him now the one friend he could trust.

'Mwanga asks you to come to Magu,' said the page-boys. 'Come and take him away from the Arabs. He says you may kill him if you like. He is ready to go with you to England if you will take him, or anywhere in the world.'

Mackay sent two trusty men to help Mwanga to escape to the coast, and he loaded the page-boys with gifts of cloth to pay for food. But Mwanga was closely watched by the Arabs, and his heart failed him.

'They would pursue us and catch us,' he said to Mackay's messengers; 'I cannot go with you.'

Again two figures came up the Usambiro hill-side, and Mackay's two comrades, Gordon and Walker[1] —the men who had been carrying on his work in Uganda—walked into his mission house. They, too, had a story to tell.

After the flight of Mwanga, the Arabs had been madly jealous of the power and honour given to the Baganda Christians under the new king.

[1] The Rev. R. H. Walker, who had come out with Bishop Parker, had gone on to join Mr. Gordon at his lonely post.

With the help of Mujasi, the murderer of old, they opened a deadly volley upon all the Christian chiefs as they came out from the king's hall; then they set up another king, Kalema, drove the Christians out of the capital, sacked and burnt the mission house, and finally thrust the missionaries on board the C.M.S. *Eleanor*, saying as they pushed her off:—

'Let no white man come to Uganda for the space of two years. We do not want to see Mackay's boat in Uganda waters for a long time to come. We do not want to see a white teacher back in Uganda until we have converted the whole of Uganda to the Mohammedan faith.'

Uganda was once more a land of blood. The Christians and pupils of the missionaries fled from the kingdom. Some sought out Mackay in his new home at Usambiro, among them his friend Sembera the ever-faithful.

Mackay welcomed the homesick Baganda, and helped them through the first bad days when they were all ill from change of diet, as they learned to eat the grain porridge of Usambiro in place of the boiled plantains of Uganda.

With a glad heart Mackay saw that, banished and lonely as he was, the chance had come to him of helping his loved Uganda. He would train the twenty pupils who had taken shelter with him, so that, whatever happened to himself, Uganda would still have her missionaries.

'They opened a deadly volley upon all the Christian chiefs'

The months that he spent with this little band of brothers were full of work and purpose. They built a stout stockade to keep the leopards from their goats. They spent nights together, camping in the soaking forest where they went to haul timber for a new boat in which Mackay hoped one day to go back to Uganda. Great tree-trunks were laid on a rude wagon made by Mackay, and were hauled by man-power, the Baganda straining at the ropes as the wagon jolted over the stony ground.

In the evenings they would sit round Mackay, and he taught them and sang with them. Sembera and the more thoughtful among them were helping him to write St. John's Gospel in the language of Uganda, and long talks they had as to the meaning of the wonderful chapters.

One day the Baganda on the hill-side gave a delighted shout as they saw a little group of their own countrymen.

'We have brought letters for Mackay,' said the new arrivals.

The letters told how the Christians from Uganda were gathering together in the neighbouring kingdom of Ankole :—

> 'My brother, Mr. Mackay,
>
> 'I, your brother who loves you much write you this letter. . . . Now these things I tell you, my brother, that at this time the Christians are very many here at Ankole. They number about one thousand in all, with women. Then from over

there in Uganda they are coming, and on the road they do not cease to come. . . .

'The end.

'I am

'Sebwato.'

This crowd of refugees in Ankole was running short of food; some desperate effort must be made to win back their homes, and Mwanga, who had succeeded in escaping from the Arabs, now saw his chance. He offered himself to the Christians as their king, to rule henceforth as they should wish, if only they would come back with him and regain the land from which they had been driven. Then he, too, sent a letter to Mackay, a note dictated to a boy but signed with his own hand:—

'After compliments, I, Mwanga, beg of you to help me. Do not remember bygone matters. . . . Mr. Mackay, do help me; I have no strength, but if you are with me I shall be strong. Sir, do not imagine that if you restore Mwanga to Uganda, he will become bad again. . . .

'I am your friend

Mwanga.'

Strange how they all turned to one slight, quiet white man who held on steadily with his boat-building and translation, a man to be relied on because all the while he was holding fast to God.

Just a year after Mwanga had fled he was carried back on the shoulders of his shouting subjects to his palace gate. He returned a wiser king, for he knew

now that his throne depended on the Christians. 'We are herding Mwanga like an ox,' said one of them truthfully.

Gordon and Walker went back to the capital to find two overgrown mounds where Mackay's well-built house and church had stood, while a pomegranate or a coffee-bush struggled through a jungle of weeds in the mission garden. A large new piece of land was set apart for them.

Seventy canoes came to Usambiro to tell Mackay the joyful news. He could not yet leave his half-built boat—which he meant to name after Bishop Hannington—but he was glad to think that the way lay open for the Christians he was training to work and teach in Uganda.

CHAPTER XV

THE HOMEWARD MARCH

STANLEY, the great explorer, was on his homeward march after the famous journey in which he had passed through the central pigmy-haunted forests of Africa.

He sent a messenger forward to Mackay's mission station to warn the white man that a great caravan was coming to visit him.

Mackay and his pupils were early astir ; they had a fat goat cooking over the fire, and home-made loaves growing crisp and brown in the oven Mackay had built. All the morning the boys would run up the hill-side to look for the first glimpse of the caravan. At last Mackay himself saw the long train of figures in the distance. He went into the house to change his working clothes for a clean white linen suit.

It was a travel-worn company that climbed the slope, but Stanley's keen eyes were as quick as usual. He noted the marks of wheels on the track he walked on, and later he saw Mackay's solid timber-hauling wagon beside the path. Then his eyes fell on a slight figure in white linen coming down the slope to meet him.

'So you are Mr. Mackay,' he said as he looked into a face with clear blue eyes and hair of a rich brown.

He took stock of the man before him, and his verdict was, 'A Scotsman, the toughest little fellow you could conceive.'

As Mackay led the party through the great stockade to the door of the mission house, Stanley's quick eyes were busy again, and he knew that what he saw could only be the result of 'constant unwearying patience, sweating under the hot sun.'

> 'There was a big solid workshop in the yard,' he tells us,[1] 'filled with machinery and tools, a launch's boiler was being prepared by the blacksmiths, a big canoe was outside repairing, there were saw-pits and large logs of hard timber, there were great stacks of palisade poles; in the corner of an outer yard was a cattle-fold and a goat-pen, fowls by the score picked at microscopic grains; and out of the European quarter there trooped a number of little boys and big boys looking uncommonly sleek and happy; and quiet labourers came up, and bid us, with hats off, "Good morning."'

Mackay led Stanley and his officers into his own room filled with his books, and gave them some real coffee and home-made bread and butter.

'We arrived broken down in body and mind,' said one of the officers, 'and prostrated and beaten down by fever. . . . He seemed to understand all that we

[1] In his famous book, 'In Darkest Africa.'

wanted, and with the utmost delicacy gave us exactly what most we needed. . . . Through his kindness we left for the coast restored to health.'

For nearly three weeks the caravan rested at Usambiro. Mackay said, as he listened to Stanley's travel stories, that he was having to himself the very news that all Europe and America was waiting to hear.

Stanley, as he grew to know Mackay, found that he had met a hero. He heard the long story that this book has told, he watched Mackay with his workmen building the boat, he listened morning and evening to his hymns and prayers with his pupils.

'Amongst so many books and children and outdoor work, Mackay cannot find leisure to brood . . . ,' he said. 'God knows, if ever man had reason to . . . be doleful and lonely and sad, Mackay had, when, after murdering his Bishop, and burning his pupils, and strangling his converts, and clubbing to death his dark friends, Mwanga turned his eye of death on him. And yet the little man met it with calm blue eyes that never winked.' 'The best missionary since Livingstone,' was Stanley's verdict on Mackay of the Great Lake.

At the end of twenty days the caravan, rested and refreshed, was ready to move on its homeward way to Zanzibar, where countless cablegrams of congratulation awaited the explorer. Letters had

come from the Church Missionary Society suggesting that Mackay, too, should go home, after his fourteen years in Africa.

'What is this you write?' he answered. 'Come home! Surely now in our terrible dearth of workers, it is not the time for any one to desert his post. Send us only our first twenty men and I may be tempted to come to help you to find the second twenty.'

He concocted a plum-pudding and gave Stanley a parting dinner. Next morning, as he wrung their hands in farewell, the officers could hardly trust themselves to speak. They were marching home to dinners and fêtes and flags and speeches and fame. Mackay stood on the hill-side waving until the caravan was out of sight. Then he turned back alone to rivet the boiler of his boat.

Five months later, in February, 1890, a comrade was staying at Usambiro mission house packing his goods before a journey to England. Mr. Deekes marvelled at the long days Mackay spent in the work-shed, followed by evenings at his translation of St. John, which had reached the fifteenth chapter and the glorious words of our Lord to His company of friends.

On the morning of his start Mr. Deekes was out early in the courtyard, helping his men to arrange their loads, but he missed the quiet presence of Mackay, who had been his companion in all the

business of packing ; and at last he went to his room. He found him lying desperately ill on the bedstead which his busy hands had made for Bishop Parker.

Mr. Deekes at once gave up his journey, and a hush fell over the courtyard where the porters had been chattering, and where Mackay's hammer was wont to clang. Mr. Deekes sat by his comrade, whose feverish brain was wandering. Ever and anon Mackay would ask, 'Are Stanley and his officers being made comfortable? Have they everything they need?'

Then Mr. Deekes himself was laid low with African fever, and Mackay in his loneliness was tended by his Baganda boys; Sembera, his faithful friend, the slave-boy of long ago who had been the first to ask to be baptized, was with his teacher all the time as he lay for four days delirious. Then, as Sembera sat beside his master, Mackay's tireless spirit went quietly to God. A great stillness fell on the hill-side as the Baganda boys whispered that Mackay was dead.

'Stanley and his party came home to . . . royal receptions,' some one has said; 'the lonely missionary went to the palace of the King of kings.'

Mr. Deekes told the workmen to take some of the planks Mackay had cut for his boat and nail them together as a coffin for the boat-builder of the lake. On Sunday his Baganda Christians carried their

master's body out past the silent workshops to the hill-side where Bishop Parker lay buried in sight of the gleaming water.

Weary with illness and very sad, Mr. Deekes broke down as he tried to read the burial service. But the funeral of Mackay the dauntless could not be all dismal. Did not his boys know that his great spirit had gone gladly to meet Christ the Lord, and to learn 'the full-grown energies of heaven'? The Baganda Christians and all the boys from the hill-top village struck up a hymn of triumph, which he had loved to sing with them.

'All hail the power of Jesu's name,' they sang, and their voices floated out towards the waters of the great lake. 'Crown Him, Lord of all.'

Mackay's skilled hands had cut and carved wooden crosses to mark the graves of Blackburn and of Bishop Parker. No one at Usambiro had the skill to carve a headstone for the master workman's grave. Instead, they marked it with the massive oval shield of a Muganda warrior.

ON NAMIREMBE HILL

It is Friday morning, six years after Mackay's soldier-spirit passed to God; the sun blazes down on that knot of green-clad hills where he fought Christ's battles in the capital of Uganda. Mwanga's reed-palace crowning Mengo hill is no longer the building that catches and arrests the eye. High on the crest of a neighbour hill rises a great steep-pitched roof of thatch, the largest building between Zanzibar and the Congo mouth. Upheld by a forest of wild-palm poles, walled in with the gold-brown reed-stems of the swamps, and roofed with countless bundles of the giant tiger-grass, stands a great cathedral built to the glory of God by the Christians of Uganda.

How Mackay, the builder, would have gloried in the streams of men and women and children, a bundle of reeds or a sheaf of tiger-grass poised on every head, who swarmed up the hill-side like an army of ants upon the march. How he would have rejoiced to see his own boys leaders in the work of building that great house of God.

Inside the cathedral the morning sun comes slanting down through the forest of pillars to rest upon the ruddy bark-cloth or the dazzling white

calico robes of some thousand seated figures. The floor of the great church is covered with groups of thirty or forty learners clustered round a teacher on a stool. How Mackay, the teacher, would have gloried in the quiet, busy hum of that great school, in which the favourite lesson book is still the first book he turned into Luganda for his pupils, the Gospel of St. Matthew.

But hark! A thunder of rhythmic sound comes flooding all the air for miles around; the great cathedral drums are rolling out their call to morning prayer. It is no longer a school but an army of brown-clad figures that we see, standing in ordered ranks as they say together the great watchword of the Christians of every century and all the lands. Sentence by sentence we hear the great words of the Apostles' Creed. Some of Mackay's boys are standing there in the white robes of important chiefs. Are they thinking of the early days when their master made his first translation of that creed, printing it on a reading sheet that filled their minds with wonder?

Far away by the door are other faces filled even now with that first blank amazement; for Wambugi, the teacher who guides the beginners through the mysteries of A B C, has gathered in a group of strange musicians from beyond the Nile, men who have come to amuse King Mwanga with their band of twanging harps and noisy horns.

It is Friday afternoon. From the chief's judgement-seat, from the banana garden or the beating of the sheets of bark-cloth, the men and women stream once more out of the sunshine into the cool dimness of their great cathedral. At three o'clock, the Christians of Uganda will meet, as is their habit once a month, to hear reports from those whom they have sent to carry on the battles of Christ east and west and north and south.

One by one the Baganda missionaries stand up and tell their tale. There is lame Michael, who tramped 130 miles to Koki in the south-west, where the people have brought him their charms to make into a bonfire. There is Noah from Toro, 200 miles to the west, a glorious mountain country near the forest where Stanley saw the little pigmy people. He has great news, for Daudi Kasagama, the noble-hearted king of Toro, has asked for baptism. There is Samwili from those isles of fishermen, the grass-green, flower-clad Sese islands in the lake. The fisher-folk would not listen to his story nor come to learn their letters. 'If the fish saw a book in the hands of a fisherman, they would all die,' said the men of the Sese isles. Then Busi, the fisher of God, prayed saying, 'Lord we hold only the bare line in our hands, it is for Thee to manage the hook.' Now he stands in the great cathedral to tell how on the island where he lives, when the drum beats at sunrise for the morning prayers, 1,000 fisher

people stream into four island churches to praise the Lord Who made the lake.

The Baganda missionaries have told their tale. An Englishman stands up and slowly reads a list of names. As he reads, ten young teachers rise from their places and stand before the great congregation. These are ten volunteers to be sent to-day to carry the message to outlying country places.

Now a great basket is placed at the head of the centre aisle and a long file of men and boys moves up in silence with the gifts of the Baganda Christians for their missionary work. A strip of bark-cloth or a goat, a hundred cowrie shells, a pair of fowls, a yard of precious calico. The pile of offerings grows.

And now from the other side of the church moves a stream of women and girls with the fruit of their toil in the gardens, a bundle of plantains, a stick of sugar-cane, a basket of sweet potatoes.

In the hush that follows the blessing one seems to hear those words of Mackay as he clung so doggedly to his lonely post a few short years ago: 'This African problem *must* be solved, and in God's name it *shall* be solved, for God means it to be solved.'

A BIOGRAPHY IN DATES

1849	Alexander Mackay born at Rhynie.
1858	The 'Great Lake' discovered by Speke.
1873	Mackay went to Germany for training in engineering.
1875	Stanley visited King Mtesa in Uganda.
	Stanley's challenge to Christendom to evangelize Uganda published (November 15).
	£5,000 offered to the C.M.S. for a Mission to the 'Great Lake' (November 18).
	C.M.S. Committee undertook Uganda Mission (Nov. 23).
1876	Mackay accepted as a missionary by the C.M.S. (Jan. 25).
	Farewell speech to C.M.S. Committee (April 25).
	Sailed for Africa (April 27).
	Landed at Zanzibar (May 30).
	Exploration of the Wami River (June).
	Exploration of the Kingani River.
	March to the 'Great Lake' begun (August 27).
	Return to the coast, invalided (October).
1877	Road-making at the coast.
	Lieut. Smith and Rev. C. T. Wilson arrived in Uganda (June 30).
	Lieut. Smith and Mr. O'Neill killed on Ukerewe (Dec. 13).
	Mackay started again for Uganda (December).
1878	First sight of the 'Great Lake' (June 12).
	Mackay reached Uganda (November 1).
1881	Sembera asked for baptism (October 8).
1882	First baptisms in Uganda (March 18).
	Ashe arrived in Uganda.
	Launch of the *Eleanor* on the Lake.
1884	Death of King Mtesa.
	Mwanga becomes king of Uganda.
	Mackay and Ashe prevented from leaving Uganda.
1885	Three Christian boys put to death.
	Mackay's house watched by sentinel.
	Bishop Hannington arrested in Busoga, and killed.
1886	Great persecution of Christians.
	Letter of encouragement distributed to Christians.
1887	Mackay left Uganda, and settled at Usambiro.
	Bishop Parker and party arrived at Usambiro.
1888	Death of Bishop Parker.
	Revolution in Uganda; flight of Mwanga.
	Missionaries banished from Uganda.
1889	Stanley at Usambiro.
	Mwanga restored by the Christians.
1890	Death of Mackay (February 8).